



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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Bill Requiring Swift Processing of Sexual Assault Kits Heads to Governor *Senate Passes AB 36*

Madison, WI – Today, the Wisconsin State Senate passed Assembly Bill 36, which will create a timeline for the processing of sexual assault kits by the State Crime Lab. The bill, authored by State Representative David Steffen (R-Howard) and State Senator Jesse James (R-Altoona), builds upon legislation passed last session that worked to eliminate the state’s backlog of sexual assault kits by creating processing and protocol requirements for law enforcement and health care professionals.

“Today’s Senate passage of AB 36 is a critical step towards this bill becoming law. Victims deserve to be prioritized in our criminal justice system. Guaranteeing the swift processing of kits ensures that victims have the information they need in order to pursue next steps. I look forward to the Governor signing this victims’ rights bill into law,” said Rep. Steffen.

Assembly Bill 36 would require that the State Crime Lab begin processing kits within five days of receipt and complete the processing no later than 60 days after processing began. This timeline would apply for kits involving cases where the perpetrator is unknown as well as cases related to an investigation involving a suspicious death. Under AB 36, all other kits would be required to be processed within six months.

“We must continue partnering with stakeholders across our state on this issue. As a cop, I know how mentally and emotionally exhausting this crime can be on victims. Having these extra efforts in place to speed up the processing time for victims, families and beyond is a win-win for Wisconsin,” said Sen. James.

Throughout the legislative process, the authors of this bill worked closely with the Wisconsin Department of Justice and the State Crime Lab to best craft this victims’ rights legislation.

For more information please contact Representative Steffen or Senator James. Their offices can be reached at Rep.Steffen@legis.wisconsin.gov or Sen.James@legis.wisconsin.gov.

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