



KARL VAN ROY

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

For Immediate Release
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Van Roy: Bills To Combat Identity Theft Become Law

MADISON – Rep. Karl Van Roy (R-Howard) is applauding the signature into law of two bills, Assembly Bill 912 and Senate Bill 164, which fight against identity theft in Wisconsin. AB 912 allows people to freeze their credit reports while SB 164 requires businesses to notify individuals when their personal information is lost or stolen. Van Roy supported each bill, both of which passed the Assembly unanimously and were signed into law on Thursday, March 16.

“Identity theft is the fastest growing crime in the country,” said Van Roy. “Credit reports are rich in personal information, so it is important that we take proactive steps to help consumers protect themselves.”

AB 912 allows consumers to freeze their credit reports, which means that an individual may prohibit a consumer reporting agency from releasing his or her information for any purpose related to the extension of credit without the individual’s prior authorization. The bill also requires a consumer reporting agency to lift the freeze upon a consumer’s request. Other states have passed legislation to let previous victims of identity theft freeze their credit reports, but Wisconsin is the first state to extend the right to everybody.

“All consumers should have the right to decide who sees personal information about their credit and finances,” said Van Roy. “By passing and signing AB 912 into law, we are empowering consumers and protecting them at the same time.”

Under SB 164, businesses, including government, must make every effort to notify individuals who may be affected by security breaches of personal information held by the business of any such breach within 45 days of its occurrence. Personal information covered under the bill includes social security numbers, state issued identification cards or drivers licenses, account numbers and pass codes, and credit card numbers. The bill was introduced after a breach at a California based company, ChoicePoint, affected at least 145,000 people last year.

“If your personal information is lost or stolen, you should have a right to know about it,” said Van Roy. “This bill keeps people in the loop, so they know to monitor their credit and billing statements for anything unusual.”

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