



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 13, 2016

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Bill Easing Burden on Victims Receives Public Hearing

Madison, WI...Today, SB 490 and AB 615, authored by Senator Jerry Petrowski (R-Marathon) and Representative Amy Loudenbeck (R-Clinton) received public hearings in both the State Assembly and Senate. The legislation addresses an often confusing situation under current law that puts the onus on victims of domestic abuse, stalking and violence to personally forward Temporary Restraining Orders, among other orders, to law enforcement and then to verify that service has occurred. This bill shifts that responsibility to the court.

“In theory, restraining orders are an empowering option a victim can utilize to invoke the protection of the law from someone who is threatening, harassing or abusing them,” said Senator Petrowski. “Unfortunately, there are some technicalities under current law that can actually create more uncertainty for someone who may be in a life or death situation. The process created under this bill will be less burdensome and confusing to victims and will give them greater peace of mind during a stressful and challenging time.”

Under this bill, courts will automatically forward the documents to law enforcement to execute service. Once service is accomplished, law enforcement may use the Wisconsin Statewide Victim Notification service (VINE) or another notification system administered by the Department of Corrections to provide notification to the victim of service.

“Quite honestly, with advances in technology, this bill is long overdue because there is no reason that a victim seeking a temporary restraining order needs to take their court documents to the Sheriff to ensure they are served,” stated Representative Loudenbeck. “Changing this procedural requirement will give peace of mind to victims of abuse and harassment, by ensuring temporary restraining orders are served in an efficient and timely manner.”

The bills now await further action in their respective senate and assembly committees.