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## WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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### Senate Approves Tougher Law for Drunk Driving

MADISON - A bill to toughen Wisconsin's drunk driving laws is getting unanimous approval.

On Wednesday, the State Senate unanimously approved a bill to toughen state laws against repeat drunk drivers. The bill is authored by State Senator Alberta Darling and State Representative Jim Ott. Representative Ott says too often there are examples about why tougher drunk driving laws are needed.

"I was reminded today of how necessary this bill is after a Milwaukee police officer was hospitalized by a drunk driver, who is currently on parole for 4th offense OWI," Ott said, "I thank Senator Darling for her leadership and tireless tenacity against drunk driving, and thank Leader Fitzgerald for bringing SB 455 to the floor. I look forward to voting on this bill in the State Assembly."

Current law allows prosecutors to let some multiple drunk drivers off the hook. Senate Bill 455 increases penalties for multiple offenders and makes the fourth offense a felony, no matter when it occurs. The bill aligns state law with surrounding states in how multiple offenders are penalized. Senator Darling says it is time to stop the revolving door.

"If our laws treat repeat drunk driving seriously, hopefully people will start to get help and not repeat their mistakes," Darling said, "Our laws haven't been tough enough to deal with the problem. It's my hope that these changes will be a huge step in that direction."

Senate Bill 455 now heads to the State Assembly for further action.

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