



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **GOVERNOR SIGNS JACQUE-TUSLER BILL PROTECTING CYBERSTALKING VICTIMS**

*The Act modernizes the law for today's technologies*

MADISON... More protection for future cyberstalking victims is on the way after Gov. Evers signed legislation expanding the legal definition of the crime.

The Cyberstalking Protection Act, co-authored by State Sen. André Jacque (R-De Pere) and State Rep. Ron Tusler, updates statutes to include modern social media communications. While cyberstalking cases could be prosecuted under prior law, these revisions expand Wisconsin's stalking statutes to specifically include text messages, email, web applications, and social media.

The authors drafted the legislation at the request of Mrs. Nikie Offield of Green Bay, whose family was victimized by this cyber harassment. But the stalking charge against the offender was dismissed due to a loophole that the phone never rang, even though the accused sent the victim thousands of harassing text messages.

"I am very grateful to see this bill get signed into law," Mrs. Offield said. "If it can help one victim receive justice it was worth it. Thanks to Sen. Jacque, Rep. Tusler, and all who made this happen."

"Our bill explicitly includes electronic means," said Rep. Tusler. "This is a constructive addition, as texting and other forms of messaging on a variety of platforms and applications have become pervasive in society. For victims of cyberstalking, the message may be electronic but the fear is real."

The new law also includes language requested by prosecutors that takes into account jury instructions in related case law and updates the stalking definition so victims are able to be more fully protected under Wisconsin statutes. This change was supported by End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin and has been vetted by the Wisconsin Department of Justice.

"The law now provides stronger protection for victims - and reduces the risk of frivolous defense challenges - by clearly defining specific behaviors as stalking to close any legal loopholes," Sen. Jacque said. "This common sense legal update will help keep Wisconsinites safe as technology continues to evolve."

Gov. Evers signed the legislation ([Assembly Bill 83/Senate Bill 85](#)) into law as Act 28.