

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 413
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety
Wednesday, October 22, 2025

Chairman Wanggaard and committee members, thank you for holding this hearing today and allowing me to speak in support of Senate Bill (SB) 413. I appreciate Senator Marklein's willingness to work with me on this important legislation.

SB 413 makes three key changes to state law to assist victims of sexual assault:

- Extends the statute of limitations for second-degree sexual assault from 10 years to 20 years.
- Provides immunity from misdemeanor alcohol and drug violations for victims and witnesses who assist them.
- Improves the lease termination process for victims of sexual assault.

The current statute of limitations for second-degree sexual assault is only 10 years, which is one of the shorter statute of limitations for this type of crime in the country. Advancements in forensics such as DNA and other technology like cell phone data, have given investigators more tools to identify a perpetrator although many years may have passed since the crime was committed. Many victims of sexual assault delay reporting their assault for years due to a variety of factors, including trauma, fear of retaliation, or dependence on the perpetrator. By increasing the statute of limitations for this crime, we will allow more time for victims to come forward and seek justice.

The next part of this legislation expands existing immunity statutes for misdemeanor alcohol and drug violations to include victims of sexual assault and witnesses who assist them. Adding those seeking to report a sexual offense to existing immunity statutes helps improve the reporting of violent crimes, supports victims in accessing urgent forensic care, and prioritizes public safety. Up to 84% of sexual assaults involve the use of drugs or alcohol by the victim. Fear of getting in trouble for drug or alcohol misdemeanors prevents survivors from coming forward to report a violent crime.

In addition, SB 413 creates an improved lease termination process for victims of sexual assault. Currently, a survivor of sexual assault can only terminate a lease early if they have proof of an imminent threat of physical violence. This bill eliminates that requirement and only requires the tenant to provide a certified copy of an injunction order or criminal complaint based on, or alleging that the tenant or the tenant's child has been sexually assaulted.

I would also like to acknowledge a drafting oversight pertaining to the existing lock change provisions in state law, which stakeholders have brought to our attention. This is addressed in Senate Amendment 1.

Mr. Chairman and members, I ask for your support of SB 413, and thank you again for the opportunity to testify before you today.