



NANCY VANDERMEER

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 70TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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Assembly Passes Additional Legislation to Check Southeastern Wisconsin Judges Not Following the Law

Madison – During today’s floor session the state Assembly took up and passed additional legislation, [2019 Assembly Bill 55](#), attempting to curb the scourge of southeastern Wisconsin judges placing sexually violent criminals on supervised release in rural areas throughout the state, including Monroe County.

Representative Nancy VanderMeer (R-Tomah) co-authored the legislation, supported the bill’s passage on the floor, and released the following statement:

“I’m happy that we were able to get this done today for the people of Wisconsin, and I’m especially pleased that we were able to get this done for those of us that live in rural areas of our state. What has been going on is absolutely not right. Judges in southeastern Wisconsin have been unjustly abusing the law put on the books last session to remedy situations like these.

“We had a widely publicized instance at home in Monroe County where a judge in Kenosha County worked out a deal with the Department of Justice prosecuting attorney and the defense attorney to place a sexually violent offender from Kenosha County in Monroe County on supervised release. It’s an outrage and a number of community members were rightfully upset. Senator Testin and I immediately contacted Attorney General Josh Kaul’s office and the next day an order was issued to correct the placement and send the offender back to Kenosha County.

“Since then, we have met with and been in contact with the Attorney General’s office and they have assured us this will not happen again. I hope that the legislation passed today will be signed into law as soon as possible by Governor Evers and that it makes it explicitly clear that my colleagues in the legislature and I, Democrat and Republican, will not allow this to continue to happen.”

2019 Assembly Bill 55 is follow-up legislation to [2017 Act 184](#), which was passed and signed into law by then Governor Walker in 2018. Act 184 was authored by Representative Scott Krug (R-Rome), Representative Katrina Shankland (D-Stevens Point), Senator Patrick Testin (R-Stevens Point), and Senator Lena Taylor (D-Milwaukee), and requires sexually violent offenders to be placed on release in their county of origin. Governor Walker partially vetoed the legislation, objecting to a clause in that bill that eliminated a 1,500 foot distance requirement previously put into place in 2016, intended to protect locations where vulnerable populations congregate, such as schools, nursing homes, churches, and parks. Assembly Bill 55 eliminates that requirement but requires a committee of county stakeholders and the Department of Health Services to consider proximity to vulnerable populations when determining local placement locations.

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The 70th Assembly District includes portions of Monroe, Jackson, Portage and Wood counties.