



For Immediate Release
May 16, 2017

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Rep. Shankland restores local control over placement of Sexually Violent Persons
New provision transfers SVP placement oversight from the state to local county officials

MADISON – Rep. Katrina Shankland (D-Stevens Point), a member of the legislature’s Joint Finance Committee, introduced a budget motion today to address growing public concern about the placement of Sexually Violent Persons (SVPs) in communities outside their home county. Rep. Shankland co-authored the motion with Rep. Mark Born (R-Beaver Dam) and the motion passed the Joint Finance Committee this afternoon on a bipartisan vote.

“Time and time again, we have seen people who were convicted of some of the most violent sexual offenses released into communities to which they have no connection, and where the local residence was chosen seemingly at random,” said Rep. Shankland. **“This has caused a lot of frustration and confusion among local residents who were not given a seat at the table. The placement of a sexually violent person is a sensitive decision that belongs in the hands of local officials, not bureaucrats in Madison.”**

Portage County in particular has been forced to house multiple SVPs who committed their crimes elsewhere in the state. Earlier this year, a Washington County judge and a Chippewa County judge each ordered the release of an SVP to a residence in the Town of Alban because existing law prevented a suitable residence from being found locally. These out-of-county judges ignored a prior Portage County Court ruling which found the same residence to be inappropriate for SVP placement.

“My budget motion returns local control and decision-making authority to counties,” continued Rep. Shankland. **“It’s time for a long-term solution that puts the interests of local officials and residents first. After listening to the people of Portage County, I have been working with my colleagues across the aisle and am pleased that our proposal received bipartisan support today.”**

Under Rep. Shankland’s proposal, the process for identifying an SVP residence will be as follows:

- If a court orders the supervised release of an SVP, the SVP’s county of residence will prepare a report that identifies an appropriate placement within the county.
- The county will prepare the placement recommendation through input from a committee comprised primarily of county officials who have an understanding of the area, with limited input from the state.
- Once the Department of Health Services has received the placement recommendation from the county, the department must submit a supervised release plan to the court within 30 days.

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A copy of the budget motion is attached.