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## **SEN. JACQUE'S BILL FIGHTING VIOLENT CRIME ADVANCES**

*Proposal tightens enforcement, ensures justice for victims of battery*

MADISON, WI...Local public safety officials will be better able to fight violent crimes such as domestic abuse and gang violence under legislation passed by an Assembly committee today.

State Sen. André Jacques (R-New Franken), author of the legislation, said he drafted the measure at the request of victims, law enforcement, and prosecutors to give local authorities more options for charging these criminal offenses appropriately to ensure justice for victims.

"Current state law is inconsistent when it comes to charging and prosecuting certain crimes," Sen. Jacques said. "Whether a gang member or violent domestic abuser can be charged appropriately makes a big difference in whether or not justice will be served."

Sen. Jacques said that under current law, prosecutors can bring more serious charges against a person who breaks into a garage to steal someone's tools or a bicycle than someone who breaks into their home to inflict bodily harm on them. Sen. Jacques's bill allows prosecutors to bring felony charges in these battery cases to make sure the punishment fits the crime.

"In other words, it is a felony to attempt to steal items from someone, but only a misdemeanor to break into their house or apartment to beat them up," Sen. Jacques said. "Clearly, we need to protect people as well as property, and these common-sense legislative revisions that will bring justice to criminals and their victims."

Sen. Jacques said his legislation provides a reasonable fix to remove the disproportionate treatment of property crimes over crimes against bodily security by raising the penalty for entering with intent to commit battery to also be a Class F Felony.

"This legislation has passed committees in both chambers multiple sessions and the full State Senate the last three sessions," Sen. Jacques said. "It also passed the full Assembly during the '17-'18 session, but was not taken up before the end of last session."

The measure ([Assembly Bill 65](#)) must next pass the full Assembly and Senate, and be signed by the Governor, to become law.

*Senator André Jacques represents Northeast Wisconsin's First Senate District, consisting of Door and Kewaunee Counties and portions of Brown, Calumet, Manitowoc, and Outagamie counties.*