



**ANDRÉ JACQUE**

STATE SENATOR • 1<sup>ST</sup> SENATE DISTRICT

Phone: (608) 266-3512

Fax: (608) 282-3541

Sen.Jacque@legis.wi.gov

State Capitol · P.O. Box 7882

Madison, WI 53707-7882

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Sen. André Jacque

March 11, 2025

(608) 266-3512

## **SEN. JACQUE'S BILL TO STOP THIEVES ADVANCES**

*Assembly committee clears bill cracking down on organized retail crime*

MADISON, WI... With violent “smash and grab” retail thefts on the rise, a state Assembly committee today cleared legislation to deter these criminals by making it easier for local authorities to levy felony theft charges against repeat offenders.

“Led by organized gangs that resell stolen goods, these brazen criminals repeatedly victimize our neighborhoods and terrorize business owners,” said State Sen. André Jacque (R-New Franken), co-author of the measure with State Rep. William Penterman (R-Hustisford). “This mayhem leaves us with more violence in our communities, and higher retail prices in our stores.”

Under current law, criminal penalties for property theft depend on the value of the stolen goods, ranging from a Class A misdemeanor for less than \$2,500, to a Class F felony if the value of the property exceeds \$100,000. Further, the penalty for the crime of retail theft varies by the value of the merchandise or service stolen. The penalty ranges from a Class A misdemeanor if the value is less than \$500, to a Class G felony if the value exceeds \$10,000.

Sen. Jacque said the bill strengthens state law by enabling felony charges for those with prior misdemeanor convictions. It also allows a prosecutor to aggregate the value of property stolen or received within a six-month period, codifying the 2019 Wisconsin Supreme Court Decision in *State v. Lopez*. Additionally, it would allow prosecutors to consolidate multiple offenses committed into a single filing.

Sen. Jacque said similar provisions were included in 2023 AB 928, which passed the Assembly Criminal Justice Committee last session with broad bi-partisan support, and are similar to changes adopted with overwhelming bi-partisan support in Minnesota as well.

“These initiatives will help turn the tide against thieves traveling across state lines to engage in retail crime and other organized financial crimes, including identity theft and credit card fraud, choosing targets they think are more amenable to their activities,” Sen. Jacque said. “This bill is an important step to fighting back.”

The measure ([Assembly Bill 89](#)) passed the Assembly Criminal Justice and Public Safety 12-0. It must next clear the full Assembly and Senate, and be signed by the Governor, to become law.

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

###