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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SENATE PASSES SEN. JACQUE'S BIPARTISAN
ELECTION WORKER PROTECTION ACT, ELECTION COST RELIEF ACT**
Measures will help local election officials in their important work

MADISON, WI... Bipartisan legislation providing relief to communities for the costs of holding special elections, and protections for those hard-working people who make our elections run smoothly, passed the State Senate today.

State Sen. André Jacque (R-De Pere), co-author of the proposals, said he was pleased by the strong bipartisan support the initiatives enjoy from state and local officials across Wisconsin.

“Fair, peaceful, efficient elections are the bedrock of representative government,” Sen. Jacque said. “Voters, poll workers, and local taxpayers should all expect these guarantees.”

Election Worker Protection Act

Sen. Jacque said he developed the legislation after the events of the past few years and discussions with local clerks and poll workers. The measure protects the identity of election workers and makes it a Class I felony to intentionally cause bodily harm to an election official acting in that person's official capacity. It also provides whistleblower protection to an election official's employment if the official lawfully reports what he or she believes are election irregularities

“Extending these protections to our public-minded friends and neighbors striving to perform their civic duty is not a partisan issue,” Sen. Jacque said. “Working at the polls should be as safe as it is rewarding to participate in the elections process.”

Local Government Special Election Cost Relief Act

Sen. Jacque said this bill applies to special elections called by the Governor to fill vacancies for the offices of State Senate and Assembly, statewide constitutional officers, state judges, and district attorneys. Costs covered by the bill include rental payments for polling places, wages paid to election officials working at the polls, and printing and postage costs for absentee ballots and envelopes.

“Local governments are already forced to stretch their budgets for election administration from two elections in odd-numbered years to four in even-numbered years,” Sen. Jacque said. “Under current law, unexpected special elections occur with little warning, and they can have substantial fiscal impacts on local governments that already have limited budgets.”

The Election Worker Protection Act ([Senate Bill 291](#)) passed by unanimous voice vote and the Local Government Special Election Cost Relief Act ([Senate Bill 278](#)) passed by a vote of 31-1. The bills must next pass the State Assembly 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.