



WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR  
**TIM CARPENTER**  
SENATOR – 3RD DISTRICT

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### Legislature Passes Bill Helping Protect Domestic Abuse Victims Law would allow restraining orders to include victim's pets.

Madison – Today State Senator Tim Carpenter (D-Milwaukee) thanked his legislative colleagues in Senate and the Assembly for passing a bill he authored to help victims of domestic violence by taking away leverage that the perpetrators can hold over a victim by threatening harm to a victim's pet.

Under current law, a victim of abuse, harassment, or threats may obtain a temporary restraining order against the perpetrator.

“This bill will allow a court to include in any such restraining order a provision pertaining to household pets. For example, the court could order that the perpetrator refrain from removing, harming, mistreating, or disposing of a household pet,” said Carpenter.

“I would also like to express my thanks to Rep. Andre Jacque (R-DePere) for his leadership in advocating for this bill and introducing an Assembly companion legislation,” said Carpenter.

“I was deeply moved by the testimony of domestic abuse survivors and advocates at this bill's public hearings. They spoke about how abusers will hold things over the victim to control them, and one of the things they can go after is the victim's dog or cat. They testified that victims can be reluctant to leave or report a violent situation if they fear a pet will be retaliated against. The reluctance or inability to flee an abusive relationship places domestic-violence victims – and their children and pets – at a much greater risk,” said Carpenter.

Still, it is reported that many judges are reluctant to include animals in protection orders because the authority to do so is not spelled out in state law.

This bill would allow Wisconsin to join 28 other states that help protect victims of domestic abuse and other violence by shielding their pets from harm.

Senator Carpenter's press releases are available for review at  
<http://legis.wisconsin.gov/senate/sen03/news>

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