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Sen. Carpenter Will Re-Introduce Bill to Increase Hate Crime Penalties

“One week from Orlando and one year from Charleston mass shootings, I hope my legislative colleagues will see the urgent need for this legislation.”

Madison – Today State Senator Tim Carpenter (D-Milwaukee) announced that in the next legislative session that he will re-introduce a bill to increase the penalties for hate crimes committed in our state.

“Our emotions, devastatingly raw from the massacre at a gay bar in Orlando last week, are compounded by the passing this week of the one-year anniversary of the murder of nine African-American Christian church congregants in Charleston, South Carolina, gunned down at a bible study due to their race,” said Carpenter.

Sen. Carpenter noted that Wisconsin’s hate crime law enhances criminal penalties when the perpetrator selects the victim due to the victim’s race, religion, color, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, or ancestry.

“Hate crime laws send a message that animosity toward a protected class is not an excuse for criminal behavior against specific people or property. Increasing the penalties for hate crimes in Wisconsin will reinforce the message that hate is no excuse,” said Carpenter.

The penalty enhancers for hate crimes has not been changed in 28 years. They were passed 97-0 in the Assembly and 27-3 in the Senate. Governor Tommy Thompson signed this into law in April of 1988.

“I hope my legislative colleagues will see the urgent need for this legislation and will support this bill next session. It is time to take a stand against bigotry and hatred in our state and in our nation,” said Carpenter.

In the 2015-16 Legislative Session, Sen. Carpenter’s bill was introduced as SB 682.

Senator Carpenter’s press releases are available for review at
<http://legis.wisconsin.gov/senate/carpenter/PressReleases/>

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