



Van H. Wanggaard

Wisconsin State Senator

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Drainage District Bill One of Six Wanggaard Bills to Clear Senate Other Bills Address Underage Drinking and Targeting Children

MADISON – A bill addressing the lack of maintenance of the Racine County Drainage District was one of six bills authored by Senator Van Wanggaard (R-Racine) which passed the State Senate unanimously on Tuesday. Other Wanggaard bills that passed closed loopholes for underage drinking and drunk driving and created a new crime for targeting children.

“The drainage district bill was three years of compromise in the making,” Wanggaard said. “In the end, the legislation will allow the drainage district to begin much-needed maintenance to maintain water quality in Racine County.”

Under Senate Bill 177, drainage districts can receive an exemption from certain permits to perform ditch maintenance if specifications are approved by the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and laws are followed. The bill also strengthens local control by giving municipalities in a drainage district representation on the district board, and requiring local government approval before a district annexes land. The bill also provides clear guidelines for the transfer of drainage responsibilities in the event that the district becomes inactive.

Wanggaard also passed a bill today that makes seeking an intimate photo of child a felony if the child is under age 15, or the person seeking the photo is more than three years older than the child. A person within three years of age would be subject to a misdemeanor.

“I was surprised to learn that while you can be prosecuted for possessing intimate photos of a child, there is nothing to prohibit you from going out and seeking to exploit children,” said Wanggaard. “This is an epidemic in our state, and it must be stopped.”

Another bill closed a loophole preventing communities from enacting “social host” ordinances aimed at preventing underage drinking parties. A recent court ruling determined the state law authorizing these ordinances applied only to licensed premises, like bars and restaurants.

“Too many lives have been disrupted by people going to these parties, and driving, or getting involved with heavier drugs,” said Wanggaard. “I am happy to close this loophole to prevent underage drinking, and put some teeth behind the saying ‘Parents who host, lose the most.’”

The Senate also passed three other bills authored by Senator Wanggaard. Those bills addressed patient access to dental records, allowing court commissioners to authorize search warrants for first offense drunk driving, and allowing the Department of Corrections to cremate the unclaimed bodies of inmates who die. All six bills now go to the Assembly for approval.

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