



Van H. Wanggaard

Wisconsin State Senator

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CONTACT: Van Wanggaard

608-266-1832

SENATE PROTECTS POLICE DOGS, JUDGES, IMPROVES COMMUNITY SAFETY

Wanggaard-Led Bills Seek to Improve Public Safety

MADISON – The Wisconsin State Senate today passed four bills drafted by Senator Van Wanggaard (R-Racine) designed to increase protections for police dogs and judges and improve safety through community-oriented policing and data sharing among law enforcement.

The Senate passed [Assembly Bill 61](#), which increases the penalties for harming or killing a police dog, to a Class H or G felony. This bill now heads to the Governor's desk.

"Police dogs are not pets. They are highly trained law enforcement partners," said Wanggaard. "Harming or killing a police dog needs to be treated accordingly under the law."

The Senate also passed [Senate Bill 169](#), which protects personally identifying information of judicial officers from public-facing websites and searches. "In Wisconsin, Minnesota and around the country, we've seen judges targeted for no other reason that their opinions, one Wisconsin judge was killed 3 years ago," said Wanggaard. "This type of violence is never acceptable. Taking this step will help protect public servants.

Wanggaard also expressed openness to expanding this protection to Legislators.

"Elected officials should never be targets for violence. Period," said Wanggaard. "Whether or not this law should be expanded is something I'm willing to discuss in the future."

Improving community policing was the focus of two other Wanggaard-drafted bills, Senate Bills 278 and 279.

[Senate Bill 278](#) safeguards \$500,000 for Community-Oriented Police (COP) Houses for another two years. The \$500,000 was scheduled to lapse to the general fund at the end of June.

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“For the last six months, I have been working with the Milwaukee Common Council and other stakeholders to secure funding for COP Houses on the south side,” Wanggaard said. “I’m looking forward to seeing this House get off the ground.”

Finally, the Senate also passed [Senate Bill 279](#), which creates a grant program for police data sharing platforms. These platforms allow law enforcement agencies to search records in participating departments leading to more effective policing.

“Information is the key to arresting and prosecuting criminals,” said Wanggaard. “Senate Bill 279 will eliminate information silos among police agencies, serving as a force multiplier, closing more cases more quickly.”

Senate Bill 279 passed the Senate on a party-line vote.

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