



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P. O. Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707-7882

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Sen. Van Wanggaard 608-266-1832

Sen. Bob Wirch 608-267-8979

Rep. Amanda Nedweski 608-237-9166

Rep. Tip McGuire 608-237-9164

KENOSHA LEGISLATORS TEAM UP TO KEEP CONFIDENTIAL INFORMANTS CONFIDENTIAL

MADISON - A bill designed to protect the identities and personal information about confidential informants became law today. Senate Bill 119 was introduced by Kenosha-area legislators following conversations with Kenosha County District Attorney Michael Graveley and Kenosha Police Lieutenant Joe Nosalik about a loophole in state law.

Prior to the enactment of Senate Bill 119, court documents, such as search warrants and affidavits containing the identity of confidential informants were not specifically exempt from Wisconsin's open records law. This loophole allowed defendants and subjects of investigation to file an open records request with the clerk of court to release the documents, without the ability to redact. Senate Bill 119 clarifies the law so that any governmental agency may redact the name or identifying information of a confidential informant.

The Kenosha Legislators released the following statements:

Senator Van Wanggaard

"This may be the most common sense bill passed this session. I was shocked to hear a law was needed. Of course, confidential informants should remain confidential as long as possible. Releasing the name of a confidential informant jeopardizes a case, and more importantly, the life of that informant. I want to thank DA Graveley and Lt. Nosalik for bringing this to my attention, and my Kenosha colleagues for joining me in passing this important law."

Senator Bob Wirch

"Thank you to our local law enforcement, who recognized the need to adjust current law and brought this matter to our attention. I appreciate that Governor Evers prioritized this legislation by signing it into law"

Representative Amanda Nedweski

"Information provided to law enforcement through confidential informants is often critical to solving criminal cases. Legislative Republicans remain committed to supporting law enforcement at every turn in any way that we can. This bill is a no-brainer and I appreciate the support of my Kenosha County colleagues in the Legislature for getting this done."

Representative Tip McGuire

"Senate Bill 119 is important legislation that will keep members of our community safe when they come forward to help combat crime.

I was thankful to be able to work with the Kenosha Police Department, the Kenosha County Sheriff's Department, and my legislative colleagues to get this bipartisan bill across the finish line quickly after this problem was identified."