



# Van H. Wanggaard

Wisconsin State Senator

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Walker Signs Five Wanggaard Bills Into Law** Bills Target Government Efficiency and Public Safety

MADISON – Over the last two days, Governor Walker has signed five bills authored by Senator Van Wanggaard (R-Racine) into law. The bills enhance public safety, and make it easier to access government documents for the average citizen.

In addition to the current penalties for crimes targeting the elderly and disabled, Senate Bill 485 creates a penalty enhancer, allowing an additional \$10,000 fine per offense to be imposed on the guilty party. Among the crimes which are subject to additional penalties are: timeshares, future service plans, rental cars, and self-service storage facilities. Representative Nancy VanderMeer (R-Tomah), co-authored this bill.

“It is a sad reality that the elderly and disabled are frequent targets for scam artists,” said Wanggaard. “Preying on the vulnerable is disgusting, and it is past time that our criminal penalties equal outrage for these crimes.”

Assembly Bill 497 helps protect the public across the state by prohibiting the placement of sex offenders within 1,500 feet of a school, day care, park, church or youth center. If the sex offender specifically targeted adults-at-risk or elders-at-risk, placement cannot be within 1,500 feet of a nursing home or assisted-living facility. If the sex offender specifically targeted children, the sex offender may not be placed in neighboring a child’s home, unless the residences are more than 1,500 feet apart. The bill also requires all efforts to place a sex offender in his or her county of residence, and requires additional safeguards for victims. Representative Mark Born (R-Beaver Dam) co-authored this bill in the Assembly.

“When I heard that a child sex offender was placed next door to 11-year old twin girls, I knew the law had to change,” Wanggaard said. “AB 497 creates common sense boundaries for sex offender housing and makes other much needed reforms to ensure the safety of the public.”

Assembly Bill 547 increases the penalties for trespassing on and damage to energy provider property. Trespassing and damage to these properties goes just beyond mere vandalism and can lead to the installation of malware or a computer virus on the power grid. Damage can impact the power grid and power supply, and interrupt power to hundreds or thousands of people. Assembly Bill 547 was co-authored by Representative Dave Steffen (R-Howard).

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“As the risk and threat to our power supply grows, the potential damage grows as well,” said Wanggaard. “Thanks to this bill, the criminal penalties are now proportional to the crime.”

Assembly Bill 633 gives citizens easier access to certain “vital records,” such as birth certificates and marriage licenses. Under current law, someone must go to the courthouse in the county in which the action took place, or possibly Madison to get their records. This bill allows any county provide the records, if they have access to those records. The bill was co-authored by Representative Joan Ballweg (R-Markesan).

“It makes no sense for someone to have to drive hours away to get a copy of a record that can be found down the street,” said Wanggaard. “This bill updates our laws to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and makes government more efficient.”

Finally, Assembly Bill 627 enrolls Wisconsin in the Interstate Compact for Juveniles. This is a technical update to Wisconsin’s laws.

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