



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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For Immediate Release

January 15, 2015

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Sen. Wanggaard and Rep. Loudenbeck Author Domestic Violence Legislation
Proposal Would Protect Domestic Abuse Victims from Out-of-State and Cyber Harassment

Madison, WI – Senator Van Wanggaard (R-Racine) and Representative Amy Loudenbeck (R-Clinton) are circulating for co-sponsorship legislation that empowers courts to protect victims from abusers who reside in other states.

The bill will help protect victims who are being abused, harassed or threatened from out of state by clarifying when the court has personal jurisdiction in certain actions for restraining orders or injunctions in cases of domestic abuse, child abuse or harassment.

“Domestic abuse and harassment do not stop at state lines. We are seeing abusers utilizing new forms of technology like social media and texting to threaten their victims. Unfortunately our laws do not reflect the highly mobile, high-tech society that we live in and we are seeing that distance no longer acts as a safeguard. This bill seeks to address this growing concern,” said Wanggaard.

“The bill does not require the court to issue the restraining order, but it does allow the victim to initiate the legal process. This bill protects victims by empowering judges with the authority to consider restraining order applications based on facts and allowing victims to get their day in court,” said Loudenbeck.

Restraining orders issued in Wisconsin are fully enforceable in every other state, so if the stalker or abuser violates the Wisconsin order while located in another state, law enforcement can prosecute that individual entirely under the laws of the other state, simplifying the process and saving resources.

The Companion Bills will be formally introduced next week in the Senate and Assembly. The Senate intends to have a committee hearing shortly thereafter.

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