



Media Release

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Rep. Shankland Introduces Legislation on Placement of Sexually Violent Persons (SVPs)

Bill provides advanced notification to local leaders and complete information for judges

MADISON – Rep. Katrina Shankland (D-Stevens Point) introduced legislation today to address shortcomings in Wisconsin law relating to the placement of Sexually Violent Persons (SVPs) on supervised release.

Recently, a Washington County judge and a Chippewa County judge each ordered the release of an SVP to a residence in the Town of Alban in Portage County, despite a Portage County judge previously ruling that the residence was not suitable due to its close proximity to a nearby community room. In the Washington County instance, Town of Alban officials and residents were not even aware that an SVP placement was being considered until after the court order had been made.

“It’s clear that a change is needed to ensure that local officials are fully informed when the state is considering the placement of a violent sex offender in their community, and that judges are fully aware if a residence has previously been rejected for this placement by another court,” said Rep. Shankland.

Rep. Shankland’s bill would:

- Require DHS, in addition to notifying local law enforcement, to notify the district attorney and local municipality of the residence before making an SVP placement recommendation. DHS must consult with the district attorney and local municipality as to the suitability of the prospective residence, if the district attorney and municipality request it.
- Require DHS, in their supervised release plan to the court, to identify if the residence had previously been recommended for SVP placement but no placement was made, as well as the reason why that placement wasn’t made.
- Require the county and DHS to consider the proximity of nearby businesses when identifying potential placement options.

“Local leaders deserve the opportunity to weigh in if a sexually violent person might be placed in their backyard. Judges deserve complete information about the suitability of a residence, including prior court rulings, before making placement decisions that impact entire communities. I will continue to fight for local control and to ensure that the voices of community members are heard,” continued Rep. Shankland.

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