



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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

June 23, 2017

NEWS RELEASE:
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For More Information:
Contact: Senator Robert Cowles ~ (608) 266-0484
Representative André Jacque ~ (920) 819-8066

‘Ruff’ Burden on Law Enforcement Removed by Cowles/Jacque Bill 2017 Assembly Bill 58 Signed into Law

MADISON- Senator Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay) and Representative André Jacque (R-De Pere) released the following statement after Assembly Bill 58 was signed into law by Governor Scott Walker during a visit to the Green Bay Police Department today:

“Until today, handlers, who regularly spend 40 hours a week or more with their K-9 partner, found their hands tied by state statutes while a crucial member of the police force sat on the sidelines,” said Senator Cowles. “By allowing K-9 officers to stay in the field after a biting event, law enforcement will save the tax payers money and continue to protect public safety with one of the best tools available to them. I would like to thank my co-author, Representative Jacque, and all of the co-sponsors for their hard work on this bill.”

“I am proud to see this commonsense bi-partisan legislation signed into law today, removing an obsolete and costly mandate on law enforcement that was shown to hinder, rather than improve public safety,” said Representative Jacque. “Law enforcement K-9 units have repeatedly demonstrated their value as a highly trained asset to their departments, solving crimes and keeping our community safe. I am very appreciative of Sen. Cowles for his leadership in getting this bill through the State Senate, and deeply thankful to Green Bay Police K9 Unit Lieutenant Matt Van Egeren and Oconto County Sheriff’s Deputy Todd Skarban, President of the Wisconsin Law Enforcement Canine Handler Association, for working with me to draft and pass AB 58.”

Previously, the law required a K-9 officer to receive three check-ups from a veterinarian over the ten-day period following a biting incident and confinement outside of work duties. 2017 Assembly Bill 58, now referred to as 2017 Act 23, allows for the K-9 officer to remain at work while the handler monitors their health and reports any abnormal behavior to the health department. The bill was supported by a broad coalition of law enforcement groups, including the Badger State Sheriffs’ Association, Chiefs of Police Association, Professional Police Association, Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs Association, and Troopers Association.

###