



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

June 26, 2018

Honorable Judge Stephen Ehlke
Dane County Courthouse
Room 7109
215 S Hamilton St.
Madison, WI 53703
Hand Delivered

Dear Judge Ehlke,

As elected officials committed to ending sexual assault in our community, we write you to collectively express our dismay and outrage about the lenient sentence you gave to Alec Cook, a University of Wisconsin student who was charged with more than 20 crimes involving 11 women and ultimately convicted in a plea bargain of sexually assaulting 3 women and choking or stalking 2 others. We understand that he could have received up to 40 years in prison and that prosecutors asked for a 19-year sentence, yet you imposed a prison sentence of just 3 years.

Your lenient sentence amounts to a slap on the wrist for a serial rapist whose violent and sadistic sex crimes will haunt his victims for years to come. In a system where perpetrators are not held fully accountable for sexual assault and violence, their victims never receive the justice they deserve. Survivors are left to feel abandoned by the system that was supposed to restore order, protect their safety, and provide justice.

While we understand that there are factors you must weigh in sentencing, we are concerned about the impact that the perpetrator's privilege had on those factors in this case. The message your sentence sends to Mr. Cook's victims, to the UW campus community, and to our community at large is clear: In just three or fewer years, this predator will be back on the streets because men like Alec Cook, men with privilege, are above the law.

We are equally concerned that your sentence will discourage women who experience sexual assault, violence, or harassment from reporting these crimes. As it stands, two out of every three sexual assaults go unreported. When brave women come forward yet do not receive justice, it discourages future victims from reporting. When it comes to reporting these crimes, the message you send future sexual assault victims is: Why bother?

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss your sentencing decision in this case with you further. We remain committed to ending sexual assault and know that doing so requires a system that provides justice for victims, restores community safety, and sends a clear message that sexual assault will not be accepted.

A staff member from Representative Subeck's office will contact your office this week to set up a meeting.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to an open and productive discussion with you.

Sincerely,



Lisa Subeck
State Representative
78th Assembly District



Terese Berceau
State Representative
77th Assembly District



Dianne Hesselbein
State Representative
79th Assembly District



Sondy Pope
State Representative
80th Assembly District



Carousel Bayrd
Dane County Supervisor
District 8



Analiese Eicher
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