



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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Senator Larson and Representative Taylor announce Body Camera Transparency & Accountability Act

MADISON – Today, Sen. Chris Larson (D-Milwaukee) and Rep. Chris Taylor (D-Madison) circulated for co-sponsorship the Body Camera Transparency and Accountability Act.

The Body Camera Transparency and Accountability Act creates a statewide, minimum set of standards for the usage of body cameras for those law enforcement agencies using body cameras. The goal of this legislation is to ensure certain safeguards and expectations with regards to body camera usage. The bill addresses issues surrounding transparency of body camera usage as well as privacy and public records issues.

“All Wisconsinites deserve to live in a safe community,” said Sen. Larson. “Tragedies that have occurred across the nation as well as in our own neighborhoods, have ignited an interest for law enforcement officers to be equipped with body cameras – both by law enforcement themselves and the public. As such, many local police departments have begun implementing body camera programs, and we applaud them for those efforts. Nonetheless, when a tragedy occurs, we owe it to everyone, especially the families involved, to ensure an accountable and transparent process exists and is followed.”

Rep. Taylor stated, “This bill doesn’t mandate that any law enforcement agency use body cameras, only that when they do, privacy interests of victims and the public’s interest in law enforcement accountability is protected. By establishing state-wide standards for the use of body cameras, we are ensuring accountability, consistency and transparency.”

The bill being introduced today will be the first step towards ensuring a minimum set of standards for agencies who use body cameras. Further, it will create a diverse council, made up of citizens, law enforcement, attorneys, the press, victim rights advocates, and others tasked with examining best-practice guidelines and recommendations for the implementation and use of body cameras in Wisconsin. This council will ensure our state continues to have an ongoing dialogue about this issue and is developing and implementing best use practices for body cameras.

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