

Ban on Sexual Contact by Law Enforcement Officers Receives Diverse Support

Written by Wisconsin Senate Democrats

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Bottom line, you can not consent to sexual contact with a law enforcement officer, while in their custody. There is an inherent imbalance of power in that situation.

MADISON - Last Thursday, Senator Lena Taylor (D-Milwaukee) testified at a public hearing of the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety for AB 171/SB 104, relating to sexual contact by a law enforcement officer with a person in his or her custody and providing a penalty. Taylor originally introduced the legislation last session after learning about the story of Anna Chambers.

In 2017, Chambers accused two New York police officers of sexually assaulting her while she was in their custody. A rape kit collected the semen of detectives Eddie Martin and Richard Hall. The officers claimed that the sex was consensual. At the time, New York law nor Wisconsin made it illegal for a police officer to have sex with an individual in their custody.

Since that time, New York's law has changed. In Wisconsin, support for the bill has been bi-partisan, receiving backing from law enforcement agencies and the community. After the hearing, Taylor released the following statement:

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When a bill is introduced in the Wisconsin Legislature, it is assigned to a committee. The committee will hold public hearings and may hold private hearings. The committee will then report the bill to the full assembly or senate. The bill will then be debated and voted on by the full assembly or senate. If the bill passes, it will be sent to the governor for signature. If the governor signs the bill, it becomes law. If the governor vetoes the bill, the assembly or senate can override the veto with a two-thirds majority vote.