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Rep. Spreitzer and Sen. Ringhand: Introduce bill to increase crisis intervention training grants for law enforcement agencies

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Madison, Wisconsin — Today, State Rep. Mark Spreitzer (D-Beloit) and State Senator Janis Ringhand (D-Evansville) introduced legislation to provide law enforcement agencies the necessary tools to de-escalate potentially dangerous situations.

Currently, many law enforcement agencies lack the ability to send their officers to attend weeklong Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) programs without additional funds. As a result, many law enforcement officers lack crisis intervention training. This legislation would increase the amount of money the Department of Health Services (DHS) is required to award in grants for mental health crisis intervention team training for law enforcement agencies and correctional officers from $125,000 per year to $500,000 per year.

“I developed this bill after conversations with Beloit Police Chief David Zibolski about increasing funds for crisis intervention training grants in Wisconsin,” said Spreitzer. “Currently, many law enforcement agencies lack the ability to send their officers to attend weeklong CIT programs without additional funds. As a result, many law enforcement officers lack crisis intervention training. This bill will increase opportunities for law enforcement agencies across Wisconsin to participate in crisis intervention training programs, making our communities a better place to live, work, and raise a family.

“In my opinion, good legislative ideas begin at the local level,” Representative Spreitzer said. “I’m always happy to listen to my constituents, and put their ideas into action. Introducing this legislation is a great example of implementing a local idea that could have a positive impact on our state.”

“Our local police do an outstanding job and they deserve access to every tool available to help keep our communities safe,” Senator Ringhand said. “Crisis intervention training will help officers deal with those suffering from mental health issues and will increase safety for our officers and the entire community.”

The proposed legislation has received the endorsement of the Wisconsin Professional Police Association.