Rep. Steffen: Blue Lives Matter bill receives public hearing

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Proposal that will protect law enforcement officers continues to move forward

Madison—Today, State Representative David Steffen (R-Howard) testified in favor of a bill he authored which will provide additional protections to law enforcement officers under Wisconsin's hate crime law. This bill would allow Wisconsin's hate crime penalty enhancer to be applied in cases where an officer is targeted for attack solely because of their profession as a law enforcement officer. Louisiana was the first to pass a bill of this kind in 2016, more commonly known as the "Blue Lives Matter" legislation, and Kentucky just passed its own version of the bill this year.

"I am incredibly excited and proud to be introducing this bill in Wisconsin. This bill will provide much needed additional protections to our law enforcement officers, who have increasingly become victims of hateful targeted attacks, simply because of their profession," said Rep. Steffen.

The bill will add law enforcement officers to the list of existing victims covered under Wisconsin's hate crime law. In Wisconsin, a hate crime is a penalty enhancer, allowing for additional fines and imprisonment if the victim is targeted based on any of the protected classes within the hate crime law.

"As the first bill that I authored this session, I am encouraged to see this proposal receiving a public hearing and moving forward. I'm thankful to the members of law enforcement who took the time to speak to the merits of this bill today, and for all of our officers who make the sacrifice to protect us each and every day," said Rep.

The bill is expected to receive a vote in the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety in the upcoming weeks.