

Reps. Sargent and Taylor: Request LAB Audit of DOJ Sexual Assault Kit Testing

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Legislators today requested an official state audit relating to Wisconsin's sexual assault kit backlog

MADISON – Today State Representatives Melissa Sargent (D-Madison) and Chris Taylor (D-Madison) formally requested the Joint Legislative Audit Committee direct the Legislative Audit Bureau (LAB) to conduct an official state audit of the Department of Justice and Wisconsin's sexual assault kit backlog.

“Sexual assault survivors deserve justice, and in Wisconsin, they have a right to be treated with dignity and respect, and that’s not even close to what they’ve received under this administration,” said Taylor. “As legislators, we have a duty to the people of Wisconsin to act when the system fails, and that’s why we’re requesting this audit.”

The joint letter from Reps. Sargent and Taylor to the Co-Chairs of the Audit Committee requests performance and financial audits of the DOJ's sexual assault kit backlog status, kit testing processes and procedures, and the more than \$5 million in grant funding the DOJ has received to address Wisconsin's kit backlog. This is the second time an audit has been requested of the DOJ after another request was made in [February](#). Today's letter from Reps. Sargent and Taylor requested an official response from the Audit Committee Co-Chairs no later than Friday, October

13, 2017.

“Enough is enough,” said Sargent, ranking Democratic Assembly member of the Audit Committee, the committee charged with formally directing the LAB to conduct state program audits.

“We made a good faith effort to work directly with the DOJ. We’ve sent the same five questions to them three times since May—and we sent them a fourth time again today—and they haven’t given us a single answer to any of our questions. We wanted to avoid getting to this point, but we have had enough. At the end of the day, we have a job to do in the Legislature, and we can’t just continue to accept the DOJ’s complacency and excuses,” Sargent added.

Sargent and Taylor’s correspondence to the DOJ regarding the sexual assault kit backlog from May 17, 2017, June 2, 2017, and September 18, 2017, respectively, can be found [online](#).

“This is a matter of statewide importance. We can’t keep letting evidence collect dust on a shelf, and I am hopeful the Committee will act swiftly to do what we can to deliver justice for survivors in Wisconsin,” concluded Sargent.

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