

Sen. Hansen: To introduce bill requiring individual locks on gas pumps

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Madison, Wisconsin — State Senator Dave Hansen (D-Green Bay) announced today that he will be introducing legislation to require gas station owners to use separate, unique locks and keys on their pumps. The announcement comes after recent reports of card skimming in the Green Bay area.

“There is a simple common sense solution to stopping or drastically reducing the risk of card skimming at gas pumps. That is to require all gas station owners to use unique locks and keys on each of their pumps,” said Hansen.

In the summer and fall of 2016 areas of the state were hit by card skimmers who stole consumers’ personal and financial information from gas stations and convenience stores by placing card skimming devices inside gas pumps. In Madison alone twelve such cases were reported.

Card skimming is relatively simple and inexpensive for thieves because many pumps use a lock that can be opened with a universal key which can be easily purchased. Because of this thieves can use the same key to unlock multiple pumps at multiple stations.

In response, the Madison City Council passed a local ordinance requiring all gas station owners to use separate, unique locking devices on each of their gas pumps. Since that time card skimming has been a thing of the past. Hansen thinks the state should enact similar protections for consumers.

Individual locks are relatively inexpensive to purchase especially compared to the financial cost to consumers whose financial information is stolen at the pump.

“Earlier in this session we passed a law increasing penalties for people convicted of

card skimming,” Hansen said. “But many of the people who commit this crime are from other states as far away as Florida and California. They don’t know about the increased penalty or don’t care because they aren’t sticking around.”

“It makes more sense to prevent these crimes from happening in the first place so consumers are protected and taxpayer dollars aren’t spent on investigating, prosecuting and housing these criminals.”

Hansen said he expects to circulate his bill for sponsorship soon in what is the first step toward introducing the bill.