

Rep. Tusler, Sen. Jacque: Fight child pornography

Posted on Tuesday, Mar 26, 2019

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Bill Closes Loophole Exploiting Children Online

Madison - Today, Representative Ron Tusler (R - Harrison) and Senator André Jacque (R - DePere) testified in support of their bill that closes a loophole allowing predators to create child pornography of a sexually suggestive manner.

“Our children are the most innocent and most vulnerable members of our community,” said Representative Tusler. “This bill closes a loophole that predators are exploiting to avoid prosecution for possession of child pornography.”

“Child predators are exploiting a loophole in our definition of child pornography and getting away with exploiting children without any penalty at all,” said Senator Jacque. “At the request of police and prosecutors, we’re closing the loophole to help keep all Wisconsin children safe.”

Under current law, a child must be engaged in sexually explicit conduct for the medium to be considered child pornography. The bill, [Assembly Bill 71](#), expands that statute to include the depiction of a child in a “sexually suggestive manner.” Predators are exploiting this discrepancy allowing them to create child erotica: sexually suggestive photos and videos with nearly-naked children in transparent clothing.

Also testifying in support of the bill were Brown County Sheriff Lieutenant Jim Valley, Eau Claire Sheriff Detective Jeff Nocchi, and Madison Police Sergeant Julie Johnson.

“Child erotica is often just the first step down the path toward greater crimes like possession of child pornography and, unfortunately, child sexual abuse,” Lieutenant Valley said. “Closing this loophole and intervening at an earlier stage will help

victims and prevent more heinous crimes.”

In 2017 the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force made 537 arrests.

“As a parent of young children I know it can be difficult to talk about the issue of child exploitation, but it is extremely important that we do so. Talking to those on the front line, it is clear that this is a much needed fix,” Jacque said.

“I am hopeful this bipartisan bill protecting our children will be signed into law this session,” Tusler said.

The bill must be voted on by the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety before heading to the full Assembly for a vote. A hearing on the bill has not yet been scheduled in the Senate.