

Assembly passes on party lines a bill criminalizing certain clerk actions

Posted on Tuesday, Jun 22, 2021

The Assembly along party lines has sent to Gov. Tony Evers' desk a bill that would create new criminal penalties for election officials.

The bill would make officials subject to a \$10,000 fine or up to three-and-a-half years in prison if they were found to have, among other things, failed to promptly report election fraud committed by other officials.

State Rep. Jodi Emerson, D-Eau Claire, on the floor told a story of a constituent who voted absentee before leaving to see family in California. According to Emerson, the constituent realized they forgot to fill out an address on the ballot envelope and her local clerk said they would double-check for them and make the minor correction if needed.

"This bill not only would've negated their vote, but it would've criminalized what the clerk did," she said. "It was customer service. It was being a good neighbor. What this really comes down to is Dems voting in a higher number of absentee balloting and you didn't like the results."

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

No Republicans spoke ahead of the vote.

The Senate passed the bill earlier this month along party lines. The Assembly today passed it 60-38 and it now goes to Evers' desk for final approval.

An Evers spokeswoman declined to comment on the vote, though the gov has previously expressed his opposition to such bills.

See AB 198 here:

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2021/related/proposals/ab198>