

# Sen. Ballweg: Emergency zones legislation becomes law

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Madison... Senator Joan Ballweg (R-Markesan) and Representative Amy Loudenberg (R-Clinton) had their bill, which creates an emergency or roadside response area, signed into law as [2021 Wisconsin Act 115](#).

According to a survey done by AAA, 17% of Wisconsin drivers have experienced a crash, or near miss, with an emergency vehicle on the side of the road, and 19% are unsure, or believe there is not a "Move Over Law" in Wisconsin.

"Our police officers, EMS, fire departments and tow truck drivers put themselves in extremely dangerous situations when trying to clean up accidents or remove vehicles from the side of our highways," said Ballweg. "This legislation provides additional protections to keep them safe."

An emergency zone is defined as a section of roadway within 500 feet of an emergency vehicle or tow truck displaying a visible signal or flashing red lights. Just like in a construction zone, this law will ban the use of cell phones, double the fines for certain traffic violations and if the traffic violation results in bodily harm, create an instance where the operator of the vehicle can face a higher penalty.

"Unfortunately, nationwide we see nearly one roadside worker or first responder lose their life every two weeks, with hundreds more injured," said Ballweg. "This legislation also includes a requirement that the Department of Transportation produce an awareness campaign to educate drivers about the new law and how they can protect emergency workers by safely traveling past these dangerous incidents."

*To reach Sen. Ballweg with questions or comments please call (608) 266-0751 or*

email [Sen.Ballweg@legis.wi.gov](mailto:Sen.Ballweg@legis.wi.gov). The 14<sup>th</sup> Senate District is located in Central Wisconsin, and is composed of parts of Adams, Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Juneau, Marquette, Outagamie, Sauk, Waupaca, and Waushara counties.