

Weekly GOP Radio Address: Sen. Ballweg touts passage of her bill to allow parents to change their children's last names if the other parent has committed sex crimes

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I'm State Senator Joan Ballweg of the 14th Senate District.

A whole family should not bear the consequences of actions taken by one parent. This session, I heard difficult stories of manipulation, shame and expensive court processes for something that seems so simple; changing your child's name.

I authored Senate Bill 627 which was recently signed into law. This legislation allows for a parent to change the name of their child, who is 14 years or younger, if the other parent was convicted of a homicide or certain sex related crimes.

Wisconsin is full of great close-knit communities that offer high caliber education, opportunities for economic success and positive social connections. No one should have to uproot their lives just to disassociate themselves with past trauma and begin to move forward.

I am proud to author this legislation with Representative Jesse James and thankful for the families who have shared their experiences.

Children are innocent victims in the crimes their parents commit. I believe the parent, who has legal custody and is entrusted with making many other significant

decisions based on their best interests, should be able to take this additional step to provide them with the opportunity to preserve some type of normal childhood.