

Rep. McGuire, Rep. Ohnstad: Legislators introduce bipartisan bill to combat drugged driving

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MADISON – Today, a bipartisan group of legislators put forward a bill aimed at curbing the rise of drugged driving in the state. Senators Van Wanggaard and Melissa Agard joined Representatives Tip McGuire and John Spiros in introducing LRB-0032/1, legislation that would invest in Wisconsin’s Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) training.

“I am proud to join my fellow legislators in introducing legislation to make our roads safer,” said Sen. Van Wanggaard, Chair of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety. “Drugged driving is on the rise, and it is critical that we address this dangerous trend head-on.”

LRB-0032/1 would commit funding to the Drug Enforcement Expert program in order to train more officers to properly identify drivers who are under the influence of drugs.

“Unlike drunk driving, when a driver is under the influence of drugs behind the wheel, there is not an equivalent test to a breathalyzer to test their impairment,” said Rep. McGuire. “One of the best tools that law enforcement has in identifying and stopping this dangerous behavior is Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) training, which uses 110 points of data to fully assess drugged driving.”

“Wisconsin has a successful but underfunded DRE training program,” said Rep. John Spiros, Chairman of the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, “With the proper investment, we can give our law enforcement officers the tools they need to get drugged drivers off the road.”

“By increasing training and using standardized procedures for identifying drug-impaired drivers, we can make our roads safer, as well as potentially reduce disparities in our criminal justice system,” said Sen. Agard. “I am proud to join this bipartisan effort to combat drugged driving.” LRB-0032/1 is supported by the Wisconsin Professional Police Association, the Wisconsin Chiefs of Police, and the Badger State Sheriffs.