

Sen. Jacque: Jacque bill prompts governor to reverse course and release pandemic relief dollars to fund the police

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MADISON, WI...In response to legislation introduced by State Sen. André Jacque sitting on the Governor's desk, and President Biden's call to fund the police, the Evers Administration today announced the release of \$1 million in federal pandemic funding to train more officers.

The Governor's action effectively enacts [Assembly Bill 836](#), co-authored by Sen. Jacque with Rep. Jesse James, which allocates \$1 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to the Technical College System Board to establish at least two part-time law enforcement academy programs across the state. Sen Jacque said he looks forward to the formal signing ceremony at a later date.

Sen. Jacque said the non-partisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau had earlier confirmed that, according to their tracking of the Evers administration's uses of ARPA funds, no funding had previously been directly allocated to law enforcement.

"The Governor has total control of how these federal ARPA dollars are spent," Sen. Jacque said. "I'm glad he finally received the message sent to him by the State Legislature and the President."

Referencing funding availability for law enforcement in his recent State of the Union Address, President Biden said, "We should all agree: The answer is not to defund the police. The answer is to fund the police. Fund them with resources and training they need to protect our communities."[\[1\]](#)

“As crime is on the rise, the number of police on our streets is at the lowest level in at least a decade,” Sen. Jacque said. “It is about time the Governor reversed this trend, and I hope he approves additional investments to support law enforcement in Wisconsin.”

Sen. Jacque said several other initiatives in his Public Safety Package could also be funded with the ARPA investments, which as President Biden noted in his address, may be used to enhance public safety. All of these bills passed with bipartisan support and co-sponsorship:

[Assembly Bill 777](#), co-authored with Rep. Rachael Cabral-Guevara, would add approximately \$10 million for more communities under the Law Enforcement Grant Program, distributed by the Wisconsin Department of Justice. Currently, just 10 municipalities across the state share about \$2 million in grant funding.

[Assembly Bill 831](#), co-authored with Rep. Donna Rozar, would dedicate \$1 million of ARPA funds to a “Pro-Cop Wisconsin” marketing campaign to recruit new officers within Wisconsin and attract officers from communities outside the state that have sought to defund their police.

[Assembly Bill 832](#), co-authored with Rep. Calvin Callahan, would use ARPA funds to reimburse the cost of police academy recruits. It would also use those funds to double reimbursement expenses to local governments for recertification costs, from \$160 per officer to \$320. While recertification costs vary by department, expenses can exceed \$600 per officer.

Senator André Jacque represents Northeast Wisconsin’s First Senate District, consisting of Door and Kewaunee Counties and portions of Brown, Calumet, Manitowoc, and Outagamie counties.