

# Rep. Steffen and Sen. James: Bill requiring swift processing of sexual assault kits moves forward

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Madison, WI – Today, a public hearing was held on Assembly Bill 36, which would create a timeline for the processing of a sexual assault kit by the State Crime Lab. The bill, authored by State Representative David Steffen (R-Howard) and State Senator Jesse James (R-Altoona) builds upon legislation passed last session that worked to eliminate the state’s backlog of sexual assault kits by creating processing and protocol requirements for law enforcement and health care professionals.

“This legislation is the final step to ensuring that victims of sexual assault receive the timely response they need when it comes to the processing of their kit. Prioritizing victims within our criminal justice system allows them to swiftly pursue the justice they deserve,” said Rep. Steffen.

Assembly Bill 36 would require that the State Crime Lab begin processing kits within five days of receipt and complete the processing no later than 60 days after processing began. This timeline would apply for kits involving cases where the perpetrator is unknown as well as cases related to an investigation involving a suspicious death.

“We must continue partnering with stakeholders across our state on this issue. As a cop, I know how mentally and emotionally exhausting this crime can be on victims. Having these extra efforts in place to speed up the processing time for victims, families and beyond is a win-win for Wisconsin,” said Sen. James.

The authors have worked closely with the Wisconsin Department of Justice and the

State Crime Lab to craft this victim's rights legislation.

AB 36 will now move ahead to be scheduled for a vote by the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety in the upcoming weeks.

For more information please contact Representative Steffen or Senator James. Their offices can be reached at [Rep.Steffen@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Rep.Steffen@legis.wisconsin.gov) or [Sen.James@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Sen.James@legis.wisconsin.gov).