

Reps. Madison, Clancy: Republicans double down on Wisconsin's mass incarceration and crime problems

Posted on Wednesday, Mar 22, 2023

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

MADISON – Today, Assembly Republicans passed a series of “tough-on-crime” legislation in their attempts to play political theater with the criminal legal system. AB 54, AB 55, AB 56, AB 57, AB 58, and AB 70 are punitive bills that will not make our communities safer, in fact data proves that they will lead to increases in recidivism and cause additional undue harm on marginalized communities across Wisconsin.

Representative Madison (D-10) issued the following statement:

“These bills will clearly have a disproportionate impact on Black, Brown, Indigenous, low-income, and other over-policed and marginalized communities across Wisconsin. AB 54 will have far reaching impacts that, if signed into law, could take decades to rectify. AB 54 will exacerbate our criminal legal system that is already operating past its capacity – Wisconsin does not have enough public defenders, correctional officers, or overall resources to sustain a growth in incarceration rates. Similarly, AB 55 and 56 are punitive bills with minimal evidence that they will actually curb reckless driving, while we know for certain that they will have disproportionate impacts on drivers of color in Milwaukee and Wisconsin.

We can't incarcerate our way to true public safety – we have to address the root causes of crime in our communities.”

Representative Clancy (D-19) issued the following statement:

“If we want to have a serious conversation about public safety, it needs to start with

a hard look at the data and the harm that we are doing under our current system of cash bail and mass incarceration. AB54 doubles down on a terrible and harmful system. According to Arnold Ventures' study [The Hidden Costs of Pretrial Detention Revisited](#), "Pretrial detention — for any length of time — is associated with a higher likelihood of arrest for a new crime before case disposition." AB 54, in combination with these other punitive crime bills, will increase the use of pre-trial detention. We call on the Republican authors to provide their promised data that proves that increasing these punitive measures will reduce crime.

We owe it to everyone in our community to replace our current failed systems, starting with adopting risk-assessment as the sole factor for determining pre-trial detention."