

# Sen. Wanggaard: Parole Transparency Act clears Senate

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## ***Bill Provides More Notice to Victims, Information about Parole Applications***

MADISON – Proposed reforms to the Wisconsin parole system giving more information and notice to the public about paroles passed the State Senate today. The Parole Transparency Act, Assembly Bill 47, requires victims be notified 90 days prior to hearing or release and requires internet posting of paroles granted, denied or revoked.

“For far too long, the Parole Commission has operated in secrecy,” said bill author Senator Van Wanggaard. (R-Racine) “The Parole Transparency Act shines a light on what is happening at the Commission. The public, especially crime victims, have a right to know who is being paroled, and when.”

Assembly Bill 47 was introduced earlier this year in response to investigations of the Parole Commission (Commission) in the fall of 2022. The bill was amended in the Senate following conversations with Parole Commission Chair-Designee Jon Erpenbach. Under the amended bill:

- The Commission must provide 90 days notice to victims of a parole interview.
- Victims are guaranteed the ability to make a statement at that interview if desired.
- The Commission is required to post the paroles granted, denied and revoked on their website and parole guidance documents on a monthly basis.
- The Commission is required to publish demographic information, including the crimes of those granted parole on a yearly basis.
- Crime victims who were minors at the time of their victimization must receive notice of a parole hearing and release.

“This bill alone doesn’t fix the problems we found at the Parole Commission, but it’s a good start,” said Wanggaard. “I am confident that legislation will be forthcoming to reform the Parole Commission and put more accountability in Wisconsin’s parole system.”

Because the Senate amended the Assembly bill, the bill now returns to the Assembly for a vote. It is expected the Assembly will send the bill to Governor Evers this month.