

Sen. Jacque: Child sex traffickers would face life in prison under bill heading to governor

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Jacque authored legislation increases penalties to combat “brutal form of modern slavery”

MADISON...Child sex traffickers would face life in prison with no chance of parole under legislation authored by Senator André Jacque (New Franken) headed to the desk of Governor Tony Evers, after passing the State Senate on a voice vote today.

Assembly Bill 86 would impose the penalty of life in prison for the crime of sex trafficking when three or more children have been victimized, changing the offense from a Class C to a Class A felony.

“Child sex trafficking is a horrific crime and a brutal form of modern slavery that steals the innocence and future of the most vulnerable – our children,” said Jacque. It is a crime that destroys lives while leaving lasting scars on its victims.”

In Wisconsin and across the nation, child trafficking and sexual exploitation of minors are among the worst forms of child abuse, and is a growing hidden epidemic. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, one in ten youth will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday. Other studies show that over 70 percent of sex trafficking begins when the victim is a minor.

“This bill sends a clear message to those who victimize children in Wisconsin: we will find you, and you will spend the rest of your life in prison,” said Jacque. “This bill is an important part of a comprehensive strategy to deter child sex trafficking in Wisconsin, provide justice to victims, and reassure them that their abuser will never

again see the light of day.”

Representative Shae Sortwell (Two Rivers) is the lead author in the Assembly. AB 86, which passed the Assembly on a voice vote last year, has the support of a number of organizations, including the Wisconsin Professional Police Association, the Wisconsin Nurses Association, the Wisconsin District Attorneys’ Association, and United Migrant Opportunity Services.

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.