

# Sen. Jacque: Vulnerable victim protection legislation sent to Assembly floor

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MADISON, WI...Bipartisan legislation authored by Senator André Jacque (New Franken) to modernize how Wisconsin handles the testimony of minors in a court setting unanimously passed the Assembly Committee on Judiciary today.

In child abuse and similar cases, audiovisual recordings of the statements of minors are often used to capture the victim's immediate account in a way that reduces additional trauma, and can later be submitted as testimony in court.

Drafted at the request of Brown County District Attorney David Lasee, [Assembly Bill 912](#) adjusts the age thresholds for the admissibility of recorded audiovisual statements made by children. This bill maintains existing law which allows a child under 12 to record a statement that can later be used in court. It permits the courts, when the interest of justice warrant, to admit statements made before a child's 18<sup>th</sup> birth, instead of the current threshold of 16.

"This change reflects the modern understanding of adolescent development while preserving due process and judicial discretion," said Jacque. "It ensures that reliable evidence is not excluded solely because of an outdated age threshold, and reduces the likelihood victims will be forced to relive traumatic experiences and recall precise details years later."

Rep. Ben Franklin (De Pere) is the lead author of AB 912 in the Assembly. Law enforcement and victim rights groups, such as the Wisconsin District Attorneys Association, Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Badger State Sheriffs' Association, and the Wisconsin State

Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police are formally supporting the legislation.

Other bills authored by Sen. Jacque passing committee on Wednesday include:

[Cosmetology Licensure Compact \(Senate Bill 335\)](#) – Developed by the Council of State Governments and supported by the Department of Defense, domestic violence prevention advocates and industry stakeholders, bipartisan legislation to ratify and enter Wisconsin into the Cosmetology Licensure Compact passed the Senate Committee on Licensing, Regulatory Reform, State and Federal Affairs on a vote of 5-0.

Rep. Joy Goeben (Hobart) is the lead Assembly author. Ten states have already joined the compact, with four others looking to join. The compact will allow cosmetologists to obtain a multistate license to practice in any member state, while still allowing Wisconsin to maintain control of our own regulatory standards.

“The compact model is one that is now successfully used in nine professions, with more being considered,” said Jacque. “This bill will remove regulatory barriers, while still ensuring that the highest industry safety and hygiene standards are maintained.”

[War on Terror License Plates \(Senate Bill 542\)](#) – Bipartisan legislation creating a special War on Terror Service Medal License plate in Wisconsin passed the Senate Committee on Transportation and Local Government on a vote of 5-0.

Members of the United States Armed Services who served in support of designated campaigns after September 11, 2001 are awarded a Global War on Terrorism Service Medal. Under this proposal, those who have been awarded the medal would qualify for a special license plate to commemorate their service. The cost would include the standard vehicle registration fee, along with an additional \$15 to cover the cost, which would be deposited in the Veterans Trust Fund.

“This special license is a small way to acknowledge the tremendous contributions made by our protectors in the Global War on Terror, and to honor the sacrifices they made,” said Jacque.

Rep. Dave Maxey (New Berlin) is the lead author in the Assembly. SB 542 will now be sent to the full Senate for a vote.

*Senator André Jacque represents Northeast Wisconsin's First Senate District,*

*consisting of Door, Kewaunee and Calumet Counties and portions of Brown, Calumet, Manitowoc, and Outagamie counties.*