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STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 4TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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Bill Prohibiting Student Strip Searches Becomes Law

Madison, WI – This week, legislation prohibiting strip searches of students by school personnel was signed into law. State Representative David Steffen (R-Howard) and State Senator Eric Wimberger (R-Green Bay) authored the bill in response to an incident at the Suring School District involving six teenage girls being ordered to strip down to their underwear by a school official. The search was allegedly conducted to find a nicotine vape pen.

Today's newly enacted law extends the definition of "strip search" to include searches that would require a student to strip down to their underwear, making this a chargeable offense moving forward. Prior to this statutory change, Wisconsin's definition of "strip search" was limited to searches that would expose a student's private areas. Because of this narrow definition, the school official who ordered the young girls at Suring to disrobe down to their underwear could not be charged with "strip searching" the students.

"Being treated with dignity and basic privacy is something that every student should expect when they enter our schools. The event at Suring revealed a statutory loophole that needed to be closed," said Rep. Steffen. "This bill will protect our students from experiencing such intrusive searches in the future and I am pleased that it has been signed into law."

For more information please contact the office of Representative Steffen at (608)237-9104 or by email at Rep.Steffen@legis.wisconsin.gov.

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