



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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GOP Radio Address: Evers' Commutation Plan Puts Criminals First

Hi- I'm Senator Van Wanggaard, serving Northeastern Racine County and Southwestern Milwaukee County.

On Good Friday, Governor Tony Evers established a commutation process in Wisconsin for the first time in more than 30 years. This constitutional authority allows a governor to lower, or end, court ordered sentences given to felons. The only restrictions Evers gave himself is that the underlying crime could not be a sexual assault, have involved a child, and if a person is serving a life sentence, they must have served 20 years.

Murderers, kidnapers, cop killers, human traffickers, domestic abusers, the worst of the worst, will be eligible to have their sentences lowered, or even ended. Some of Wisconsin's worst criminals could go free. Even more troubling is that he set up a special process for felons who were juveniles sentenced to life sentences. There's only a handful of them in Wisconsin – eight total, with four eligible under Evers' criteria.

Don't get me wrong, I support second chances as much as the next guy, especially for kids. A few years ago, I was working on a bill to allow for review of juvenile life sentences. I stopped when I saw the heinous details about three of these killers.

One of them shot a police officer 3 times in the back during a traffic stop.

Another juvenile was invited into a man's home. He then decided to beat the man with a baseball bat, and stabbed him until the knife bent. Then, he went to get another knife and stabbed him some more. He wasn't finished v yet.

The last one killed 2 people, paralyzed one, and left another without a foot and a hand, by circling a car and filling it with 40 bullets from an AK-47. The judge said it was like he had ice water in his veins, and never wanted him to get out of prison.

These murderers all killed within a few months of their 18th birthday. The youngest was 17 years and 8 months old. Clearly old enough to know that murder is wrong.

The idea that Governor Evers created a process to allow him – and him alone - to decide to let them out of prison early is disgusting. They are not victims of an unjust system, or a bad law. These killers EARNED their life sentences. And when Governor Evers announces these commutations over a holiday weekend later this year, Wisconsin will be less safe than it was the day before.

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