

Sexual Assault Kit Bills will help create a Safer, More Compassionate Wisconsin

Written by Melissa Agard Press

Wednesday, 17 March 2021 10:12 - Last Updated Thursday, 18 March 2021 10:30



2 bills passed Tuesday will ensure a procedure is in place that upholds survivors' dignity, choice, and the right to a fair and just process.

MADISON - Tuesday, Senator Melissa Agard (D-Madison) voted in favor of SB 71 and SB 94 which both address the sexual assault kit backlog in Wisconsin. Senator Agard released the following statement:



“While no piece of legislation can ever erase the trauma of sexual violence, failures to effectively and efficiently collect, submit, and store kits should never be a barrier to justice,” Senator Agard stated. “It is vitally important for people to trust their government when they are the victim of a horrible crime. What we are doing today is creating a system so people can trust their government and the handling of these cases. ”

“Ultimately, the most fundamental role of government is to protect its citizens. When someone in our community is the victim of a sexual assault - the system has failed. It is the role of government to step up and provide for a safer, more compassionate path so that people can heal. So that victims become survivors.

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"I have championed legislation about sexual assault kits and our state's backlog for three sessions. I have heard from victims and survivors of sexual assault. I carry their stories with me, and have promised them I will work tirelessly on their behalf to create a better system.

"The bills passed today will ensure a procedure is in place that upholds survivors' dignity, choice, and the right to a fair and just process, protecting those who choose not to report at the time of an assault, or who change their minds.

[SB 71](#) is aimed at 2 common sense things: First, ensuring that justice is not delayed for survivors of sexual assault. And second, making sure that we do not have a backlog of untested sexual assault kits in Wisconsin ever again.

[SB 94](#) establishes a Sexual Assault Kit Tracking System to provide victims of sexual assault access to information about the status of any sexual assault kit they have provided.

"I am proud of the bipartisan group of legislators that worked on these bills, and extend my thanks to Attorney General Josh Kaul, who has championed this legislation. I am hopeful that the Assembly will take up these bills quickly and send them to Governor Evers' desk," Senator Agard concluded.