http://newiprogressive.com/images/stories/S5/rape-2-s5.jpg



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MADISON - Already 11 DNA matches have been made from the mountain of sexual assault evidence kits that piled up on Attorney General Brad Schimel's watch. That points to 11 potential rapists, previously unknown to investigators, that may have dodged justice due to his incompetence.

Schimel's neglect may have given potential predators the ability to reoffend in the years it has taken to test his backlog of 6,000 untested kits uncovered in 2014. Less than twenty percent of kits have been tested so far, as Schimel has made excuse after excuse despite multiple million-dollar grants he was given for the explicit purpose of ending the backlog

"To know that there are potential predators who have been free to prey on victims, possibly for years, when there could have been evidence here all along to keep Wisconsinites safe makes me absolutely furious," said Martha Laning, chair of the Democratic Party of Wisconsin. "We are talking about real people -- mostly women and many children -- who have been denied justice and closure for decades. Imagine the trauma that Brad Schimel has been complicit in."



Schimel was put on notice for his neglect nearly four years ago. Some kits dated back decades, leaving these survivors with little recourse for justice due to the statute of limitations. Thousands of these untested kits, about one-third, involve possible child victims.

"Brad Schimel should apologize individually to every survivor -- the women, men and children who come forward to endure this invasive procedure only to have Schimel drop the ball on his most basic responsibility. Instead, all they have heard for years is silence and now a litany of excuses from Wisconsin's negligent attorney general."

In 2015, the Wisconsin Department of Justice received a $4 million grant to investigate and prosecute these cases. Since then, only a quarter of the 4,000 tests that were able to be scheduled for analysis have actually been tested. Brad Schimel has made a number of excuses for his continued neglect of the issue despite continued funding and support.

In contrast, Portland, Oregon received a sexual assault kit testing grant that same year, tested many of the kits and prosecutions are already underway.

"The man whose job is justice on our behalf has failed us, responding to survivors whose lives have been utterly shattered with excuses and neglect. Brad Schimel cannot be trusted to protect the people of Wisconsin."