

**Alberta Darling**  
**Wisconsin State Senator**  
Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Finance

Testimony before the Senate Committee on Insurance, Financial Services, Government  
Oversight and Courts  
Senate Bill 332  
Thursday, September 19, 2019

Thank you Chair Craig and committee members for holding a public hearing on Senate Bill 332. This important piece of legislation will create the Wisconsin Sexual Assault Kit Tracking System.

It's imperative for victims of a crime to have access to their information as it moves through the criminal justice system. Under the bill, the Wisconsin Sexual Assault Kit Tracking System will be a database for health care professionals, law enforcement, state crime laboratory personnel, and prosecutors to update information on the location and status of a sexual assault kit. The bill also enables victims to track or receive updates on the location and status of their kit. In order to accomplish this, the bill provides \$800,000 in funding to create the initial infrastructure for the database.

Senate Bill 332 enables survivors of assault to confidentially follow their sexual assault kit from collection through the justice process. In doing so, the Wisconsin Sexual Assault Kit Tracking System will bring accountability into the processing of sexual assault kits. It will also facilitate victims' ability to easily interact with the justice system as they seek results for their case. It's my hope that this accountability and transparency for victims will help to ensure another backlog does not rise in Wisconsin.

In passing Senate Bill 332, Wisconsin will be able to join the nationwide movement to ensure that victims of sexual assault have the right to obtain vital information about both the location of their kit and the status of their case. This is truly a bi-partisan issue that will ensure Wisconsin statute protects and empowers victims as well as prevents another backlog of cases.

I hope to count on your support for Senate Bill 332.



STATE OF WISCONSIN  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Josh Kaul  
Attorney General

Room 114 East, State Capitol  
PO Box 7857  
Madison WI 53707-7857  
(608) 266-1221  
TTY 1-800-947-3529

**PREPARED TESTIMONY OF ATTORNEY GENERAL JOSH KAUL**

Senate Committee on Insurance, Financial Services, Government Oversight and Courts

Thursday, September 19, 2019

Chairperson Craig, Vice-Chair Stroebel, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of Senate Bill 332. I also thank the authors of this legislation, Senators Darling and Schachtner and Representatives Thiesfeldt and Taylor. And thank you as well to the members of the Attorney General's Sexual Assault Response Team and the members of the kit tracking work group for their work on this issue.

The creation of a sexual assault kit tracking system in Wisconsin will help empower survivors of sexual assault. With a kit-tracking system, survivors would have the option of learning where their kit is in the testing process.

Having a kit tracking systems has been identified as a best practice by a working group empaneled by the United States Department of Justice's National Institute of Justice. And several other states already have sexual assault kit tracking systems. Wisconsin should have a kit-tracking system as well.

The Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) has worked on several technical changes to this bill in order to ensure that the kit-tracking system functions in a way that is consistent with the bill authors' intent. It is DOJ's understanding this this amendment will be introduced soon.

Moving forward, there will be important details to work out, including how best to ensure that the highly personal information that a survivor can obtain through a kit-tracking system is accessible only to those who should have access. DOJ looks forward to continuing to work with members of the legislature on these topics.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this legislation. If you have any questions or require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Chris McKinny, DOJ's Government Affairs Director, at (608) 224-9207 or [McKinnyCJ@doj.state.wi.us](mailto:McKinnyCJ@doj.state.wi.us).