



State of Wisconsin
2025 - 2026 LEGISLATURE

LRB-3561/1
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2025 SENATE BILL 355

June 27, 2025 - Introduced by Senators LARSON, CARPENTER, KEYESKI, RATCLIFF and HABUSH SINYKIN, cosponsored by Representatives HYSSELL, MAYADEV, BARE, ARNEY, CLANCY, DESANTO, DESMIDT, EMERSON, HAYWOOD, HONG, JOERS, MCCARVILLE, MIRESE, MOORE OMOKUNDE, NEUBAUER, ORTIZ-VELEZ, PHELPS, PRADO, RIVERA-WAGNER, ROE, SINICKI, SNODGRASS, STROUD, STUBBS, SUBECK, UDELL, ANDRACA and MADISON. Referred to Committee on Licensing, Regulatory Reform, State and Federal Affairs.

- 1 **AN ACT** *to create* 895.059 of the statutes; **relating to:** establishing a civil cause
2 of action for civil rights violations.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill establishes a civil cause of action for civil rights violations. Under the bill, any person who has been deprived of any due process or equal protection rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the constitution or laws of the United States, or any rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the constitution or laws of this state, by a person acting under color of law, or whose exercise or enjoyment of those rights, privileges, or immunities has been interfered with or attempted to be interfered with, by threats, intimidation, or coercion by a person acting under color of law, has a cause of action and may bring suit against another person, including the state or any political subdivision, department, agency, or instrumentality of the state, for damages and for injunctive or other appropriate relief. The bill provides that the court must also award reasonable attorney fees and costs to a plaintiff that prevails in an action under the bill. Under the bill, a plaintiff must bring an action for a violation of the provisions in the bill within six years after the alleged violation occurs.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SENATE BILL 355**SECTION 1**

SECTION 1. 895.059 of the statutes is created to read:

895.059 Civil rights violations. (1) Any person who has been deprived of any due process or equal protection rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the constitution or laws of the United States, or any rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the constitution or laws of this state, by a person acting under color of law, or whose exercise or enjoyment of those rights, privileges, or immunities has been interfered with or attempted to be interfered with, by threats, intimidation, or coercion by a person acting under color of law, has a cause of action and may bring suit against another person, including the state or any political subdivision, department, agency, or instrumentality of the state, for damages and for injunctive or other appropriate relief.

(2) In addition to any damages, injunction, or other appropriate relief awarded to a prevailing plaintiff in an action under this section, the court shall award the prevailing plaintiff, notwithstanding the limitations of s. 814.04, reasonable attorney fees and costs.

(3) Sections 893.80 and 893.82 do not apply to actions commenced under this section.

(4) An action under this section shall be commenced within 6 years after the alleged violation of sub. (1) occurs or be barred.

SECTION 2. Initial applicability.

(1) This act first applies to a cause of action accruing on the effective date of this subsection.

(END)