



September 7th, 2023

Testimony on Assembly Bill 327

Relating to: receipt of anatomical gifts by search and rescue organizations for human remains detection canines

Thank you, Chairman Spiros and members of the committee for hearing this important legislation today. Canine search and rescue dogs serve as an integral part of teams searching for missing people. These dogs go through rigorous and extensive real-world training situations in order to hone their ability in detecting odors and adapting to various settings and environments. In order for these canines to effectively and successfully do their jobs, their training needs to be as real as possible so mistakes are not made in the field. Unfortunately, this isn't possible under current state statute.

State law does not allow them to train with real human organs, which hampers their ability to be fully prepared when missing person situations arise. AB 327 would allow certain search and rescue organizations or recovery teams that use human remains detection canines to receive anatomical gifts for training purposes. The use of real organs is important during training because it better simulates authentic scenarios helping the dogs be better prepared for the real thing.

For context, anatomical gifts are parts of the human body donated after death. Someone can donate their organs for research, education, eye and tissue bank, or to an organ procurement organization for transplant or therapy. General organ donations, where a donor does not specifically identify a recipient, will be given to the organization or person who needs them the most.

In order to determine which organization or person receives your anatomical gift, current statute has outlined a hierarchical procedure for passing on your organs. This bill, however, does not touch nor disrupt this hierarchy that is already in place. This bill would simply allow these canine teams the possibility of receiving anatomical gifts from a donor who specifically identifies their intent to have their organs be used for search and rescue training. AB 327 will grant these search and rescue teams' access to essential resources to train, find and save lives.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill, and I will happily take any questions you might have.

Respectfully,

Senator Jesse James
23rd Senate District
Sen.James@legis.wisconsin.gov

From: [sardog](#)
To: [Bowler, Cameil](#)
Subject: Assembly Bill 327
Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 6:10:11 PM

My name is Sarah Garfunkel, DVM and I am the K9 Manager of K9 Emergency Response Teams of Wisconsin.

I support Assembly Bill 327, because it is critical to the proper training of human remains detection K9's, that handlers have access to a variety of types and sizes of human source material. In addition, it is important to be able to train K9's on sources that are at different stages of decomposition, which requires having access to fresh material on a regular basis.

Currently, it is very difficult to obtain human source material in Wisconsin. K9 handlers have to use their few, small sources for years which is not conducive to good training and does not meet the best practices guidelines.

Almost every handler in Wisconsin is an unpaid volunteer who offers their services at no charge and at their own expense, and we strive to maintain the highest standards for both ourselves and our K9's.

Please vote yes on Assembly Bill 327 so that we, as Human Remains Detection K9 handlers can provide the community and law enforcement with the best trained K9's possible.

Sincerely,

Sarah Garfunkel, DVM

From: [A Tree](#)
To: [Bowler, Cameil](#)
Subject: ATTN: ASSEMBLY BILL #327
Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 11:09:05 PM

To whom it may concern:

I am a K9 handler for both Wisconsin Emergency Task Force #1 as well as a private civilian K9 SAR (Search and Rescue) organization, K9 Emergency Response Teams. I am writing to you to emphasize how important Assembly Bill #327 is to the training of K9s for Search and Rescue.

K9 handlers presently train their K9s on as full an array of human cadaver materials as they and their team can provide so their K9s can accurately and efficiently search for human remains under any and all environmental and situational conditions, from the recently deceased hiker who lost his or her way, to a 20-year old cold case homicide. The many thousands of organic compounds released by a human body during its different phases of decomposition are impossible to replicate w/the cadaver materials to which we presently have access. Generally, cadaver handlers spend years acquiring their 'encyclopedia' of cadaver training materials for their K9s, from very fresh bone material from hip and knee replacements to dried human bones purchased from licensed dealers, to whatever organ replacements happen in our families' or friends' circles. We face enormous obstacles in our quest to acquire varied human cadaver materials to train our K9s and generally must rely on requesting friends and family to make donations. But that is a very piecemeal process and it takes years to develop one's own 'encyclopedia' of cadaver training materials.

Many K9 cadaver handlers consequently end up taking courses specifically designed for K9s and their handlers at various body farms around the United States. But because trips to body farm training facilities generally involve long-distance driving to North Carolina, Texas, etc, they're expensive and not every handler can afford to give that training to their K9.

For the sake of the families of the missing, please vote "YES" on Assembly Bill #327 to enable us as K9 handlers to provide the best possible training for our K9 partners.

Sincerely,

S. Alexandra Leary, K9 Handler,
(Area Search Live Find, Human Remains Detection)
Wisconsin Emergency Task Force #1,
K9 Emergency Response Teams, NW Division