



Van H. Wanggaard

Wisconsin State Senator

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 303

Thank you committee members for today's hearing on Senate Bill 303, which changes a term in last session's Act 109.

As you may be aware, the 2021-23 budget contained \$2.5 million to fund grants for interactive maps for school buildings. 2021 Act 109 created the structure to allocate these grants funds for "critical incident mapping," a term that is used by law enforcement and security personnel across the country.

Act 109 has been a highly successful and sought-after grant, with more applications than funds available. Earlier this year, the Department of Justice reallocated existing school safety funds to this grant, and last month, Republicans allocated an additional \$2.5 million to meet demand for this important and popular program.

Earlier this year, we learned that the term "critical incident mapping" had been trademarked by a vendor of these products. As a result, some school districts believed that only products by that specific vendor were allowable for the grant. Obviously, this is a problem. Our intention was never to require school districts to contract with one specific vendor to improve security in our schools.

We looked at different methods to correct this problem. We studied whether defining "critical incident mapping" would clear up confusion about allowable products and/or defeat the trademark. We also considered whether changing the wording of the product would solve the problem. We spoke with different stakeholders including vendors to get their input, as well.

Ultimately, we went with a hybrid approach to ensure that schools can use multiple vendors when using these grants. First, we changed the term from the trademarked "Critical Incident Mapping" to "Interactive Critical Mapping Data." We also defined the term to mean "interactive representations of a specific location that are verifiable, digital, shareable and shown in real time." The definition captures the critical components of the type of product the grant is to be used for. Both the definition and the new term are supported by vendors and the authors of last session's bill. And importantly, neither is trademarked.

In the end, this is a simple bill ensuring fairness in a grant process to help keep our children safe, and it deserves this committee's support.

Serving Racine and Kenosha Counties - Senate District 21

State Capitol, P.O. Box 7882, Madison, WI 53707-7882 • (608) 266-1832 • Toll-free (866) 615-7510
Sen.Wanggaard@legis.wi.gov • SenatorWanggaard.com



ELLEN SCHUTT

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 31ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

September 27, 2023

Testimony on Senate Bill 303

Thank you Chairman Wanggaard and committee members for hearing Senate Bill 303 today. In short, this bill makes a technical change to the successful school safety mapping program and how it defines critical mapping data for school safety plans.

For background, over the past two budgets the Joint Committee on Finance has invested money to ensure that every school and law enforcement department in the state has access to grant funds to improve their response time to critical incidents.

School districts and law enforcement jointly apply for these funds. Once approved, schools and local enforcement, and other first responders, receive these detailed maps of schools. The maps include details of both the inside and outside of a school. So, if there is an active shooter, a fire, tornado, or other critical situations, law enforcement and other first responders know the exact layout of the school they are entering. This allows them to remove wounded more quickly, and to address a dangerous situation or person more quickly.

Schools are not the only entities that use these maps in Wisconsin. Companies such as; S.C. Johnson, AmFam Field, Molson Coors and other businesses and entities use these maps.

After the initial investment in the 2021-2023 state budget, more schools applied for funding than there were funds available. Working with my colleagues in the Assembly, as well as Senator Wanggaard and Senator James, we were successful in having more funding set aside this budget. Now all schools, public and private, will have access to these grant funds. I would like to thank the committee members on the Joint Committee on Finance for their support and recognition of this important program.

The bill before you today uses the term “interactive critical mapping data” to describe the mapping data and defines the term as interactive representations of a specific location that are verifiable, digital, shareable, and shown in real time. This small technical change from existing statute helps make sure prospective vendors are able to bid and know the requirements needed.

As we continue to proactively find ways to keep our schools and students safe, it is important we look at new technologies and their potential to assist law enforcement. I am proud to support programs like these that are embraced by school district leaders and law enforcement professionals.

Thank you for your consideration of Senate Bill 303.

Good morning, my name is Dan Craigie and I'm the Strategic Development Director at GeoComm. I'd like to thank Chair Wanggaard, Vice Chair Jacque and the rest of the Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony today in support of Senate Bill 303.

GeoComm is a MN-based Safety and Security GIS company (GIS is Geographic Information Systems and is the data behind maps) and has over 100 current and former customers in the State of Wisconsin. From La Crosse to Manitowoc and Janesville to Ashland, we have been providing our products and services to 9-1-1 and other Public Safety agencies across the State of Wisconsin for over 20 years. This includes being selected by the WI Dept. of Military Affairs in 2020 to complete a benchmark data analysis for every county across the state to determine NG911 readiness and then in August of this year, selected to provide statewide GIS data management services to support Wisconsin's NG911 implementation. More recently we've started to engage K12 schools for their "Critical Incident Mapping" needs, which is where my testimony today is focused.

Wisconsin Act 109, which was passed on December 3, 2021, and dealing with a schools required school safety plan, provides schools with funding and an option to provide Critical Incident Mapping data to relevant law enforcement agencies and the Office of School Safety in lieu of blueprints. This Critical Incident Mapping data is essentially an indoor map of a school along with highly relevant information added such as door numbers, locations of AED's and other information that provides first responders with an enhanced situational awareness when responding to emergencies.

I commend the bill authors and the State of Wisconsin for their leadership on this issue as few localities had recognized the need for this data at the time. While we all use mapping applications to get from point A to point B on a daily basis, there is a noticeable gap when venturing indoors. The lack of easily accessible and interoperable indoor maps, particularly for schools, slows response times and limits the effectiveness of a public safety response. The State of Wisconsin recognized this and rightly passed legislation to protect students during times of emergency.

There is concern, however, in that the specific terminology used, Critical Incident Mapping Data has since been granted Trademark protection by the United States Patent and Trademark Office. After the bill was passed late in 2021, the firm responsible for pushing the original legislation applied for Trademark protection on September 30th, 2022. While it does not completely forbid GeoComm from building indoor maps for schools in WI, it does limit our marketing activities that communicate our ability to comply with Wisconsin ACT 109 and its related Critical Incident Mapping Data grant program. Essentially, we have to sit back and hope that a school reaches out to us to perform the work as our legal team does not want to risk potential litigation from marketing and sales efforts from the Trademark holder.

In fact, the current Trademark holder has brought litigation against other firms for violating said Trademark protection, thus limiting the number of potential vendors and decreasing competition in the State. Ultimately, this increases prices for schools in Wisconsin and reduces the number of schools that can participate in the program as there is a finite amount of funding.

GeoComm supports Senate Bill 303 as the new term of interactive critical mapping data is not protected by Trademark and affords any firm willing and able to provide mapping services to schools, the chance to do so.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments today.

Dan Craigie
dcraigie@geocomm.com
612-208-8056