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State Senator - Senate District 28

**Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor**  
**Senate Bill 567 and Assembly Bill 707**  
**February 13, 2014**

Greetings Chair Grothman and committee members, and thank you for your attention to Senate Bill 567 (SB 567) and companion bill Assembly Bill 707 (AB 707). SB 567 and AB 707 provide courts the options of offering greater protection to individuals seeking a restraining order and that are at serious risk of harm.

A person in an abusive relationship does not normally seek a restraining order at the first sign of trouble. Instead, there are a series of incidents that lead to a breaking point. Under current law, a restraining order may only be granted for a period of up to four years. If the actions leading to a restraining order are serious and a court determines there is a substantial risk of rape or murder, the court should be given the option to issue a restraining order and keep it in place for a longer period of time. The bills create the option of issuing a restraining order involving substantial risks of homicide or sexual assault for a longer period of time.

I was shocked to learn earlier this session that a permanent restraining order has a maximum duration of four years. The courts need greater flexibility in addressing troublesome situations giving rise to restraining orders, and victims deserve greater protection. There is a wide array of behavior causing restraining orders. In extreme instances restraining orders should last longer than four years. SB 567 and AB 707 give courts direction and permission to treat serious situations with lengthier restraining orders.

An amendment addresses two issues. First, the bill as drafted allows for a restraining order with aggravating circumstances to last eight years. I am pleased to inform you the amendment will increase the length of time to ten years. Second, the language clarifies the enhanced restraining order will not affect people with an existing restraining order asking a court for a new or extended restraining order. The purpose for the clarification is to address concerns by domestic violence advocates about potentially undesirable effects of SB 567 and AB 707.

I ask the committee approve SB 567 and AB 707. Thank you for your attention to SB 567 and AB 707.