



JOAN BALLWEG

STATE SENATOR · 14TH SENATE DISTRICT

Senate Bill 558: Law Enforcement Investigative Services and Making an Appropriation
Testimony of State Senator Joan Ballweg
Senate Committee on Transportation and Local Government
November 3, 2021

Thank you, Chair Petrowski, and members of the committee for holding this public hearing.

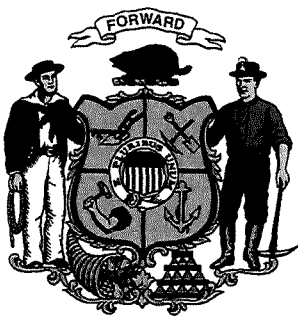
When a situation happens on state correctional facility grounds that is beyond the control of correctional security staff, the Department of Corrections (DOC) calls on local governments to provide first responder and criminal investigative services. Examples of incidents include death investigations, assaults or batteries on facility staff, certain rape situations or drug investigations.

Currently, DOC reimburses two local units of government, Dodge County and the Village of Allouez, for local law enforcement services under specific memoranda of understanding agreements. However, there has been a demand for similar reimbursements across the state.

For example, in the 14th Senate District, the Village of Redgranite Police Department has responded hundreds of times to the Redgranite Correctional Facility since 2011. These responses pull the police department's few full-time staff from their community to serve state facilities. Providing reimbursement for these services would free up resources for the communities these local agencies are meant to serve.

In addition to the policy changes, this bill also reallocates funds from the DOC general program operations appropriation to the law enforcement investigative services reimbursement, which would allow for all reimbursements to be disbursed from the same account.

Thank you for your consideration of this legislation, and I am happy to answer any questions.



Wisconsin Department of Corrections

Governor Tony Evers | Secretary Kevin A. Carr

**Testimony for SB558/AB569– Law enforcement investigative services and making an appropriation
Senate Committee on Transportation & Local Government
Wednesday, November 3, 2021**

Thank you Chairperson Petrowski and committee members for the opportunity to testify in support of SB558/AB569. I am, Paulina Gutiérrez, Legislative Advisor for the Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC).

The DOC is happy to see that this item which was originally submitted in the Governor's 21-23 budget, is back up for consideration. The Governor submitted this proposal to resolve the omission of cities, towns, and villages in the reimbursement process, and reallocate funding into a sum sufficient appropriation for DOC to reimburse local law enforcement agencies for their investigative services occurring in our facilities.

You may already be aware that the DOC operates 36 secure facilities around the State of Wisconsin on a 24/7/365 basis. We currently have approximately 20,000 persons residing in our facilities, with about 7,000 dedicated public servants working around the clock in those same facilities.

Our relationship with local law enforcement is a critical component to our operations and the safety and security of our staff and the people in our care.

If there are allegations of criminal conduct within our institutions, we will contact local law enforcement for an investigation. While many times our institutions are engaging with county Sheriffs, there may be instances where a local police department may be the first responder. Currently, the law provides authority for reimbursement to only counties. This bill makes the necessary changes to clarify the process for reimbursement and creates an equitable path for reimbursement to county and local law enforcement for investigative services rendered at a DOC facility.

I would also like to thank Senator Ballweg and Representative Peterson, and other cosponsors for their efforts to reengage the legislature to resolve the issue of reimbursement to local law enforcement.

Thank you again for your consideration and I will take any questions you may have regarding this bill.

Sincerely,

Paulina Gutiérrez

Legislative Advisor

Wisconsin Department of Corrections