

☛ **13hr\_AC-Co\_ab0615\_pt01**



☛ **02/06/2014 Public Hearing**

(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

**WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ...  
PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS**

**2013-14**

(Session)

**Assembly**

(Assembly, Senate, or Joint)

**Committee on ...  
Corrections  
(AC-Co)**

**INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL**

- Appointments ... **Appt** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Clearinghouse Rules ... **CRule** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Hearing Records ... **HR ... bills and resolutions** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
  - (**ab** = Assembly Bill)                      (**ar** = Assembly Resolution)                      (**ajr** = Assembly Joint Resolution)
  - (**sb** = Senate Bill)                              (**sr** = Senate Resolution)                              (**sjr** = Senate Joint Resolution)
- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**

\* Contents organized for archiving by: Mike Barman (LRB) (December/2014)

## Assembly

### Record of Committee Proceedings

#### **Committee on Corrections**

##### **Assembly Bill 615**

Relating to: allowing municipal prisoners to be imprisoned in a bordering county within or outside of the state.

By Representatives Billings, Doyle, Nass, Milroy, Kahl, Berceau, Danou, Ohnstad and Hulsey; cosponsored by Senator Vinehout.

January 10, 2014      Referred to Committee on Corrections

February 06, 2014      **Public Hearing Held**

Present:    (9)      Representative Bies; Representatives Schraa, Brooks, Krug, Thiesfeldt, Kleefisch, Doyle, Pasch and Zamarripa.

Absent:     (0)      None.

Excused:  (0)      None.

##### Appearances For

- Rep. Jill Billings - 95th Assembly District
- Robert Abraham - LaCrosse Police Department
- Ron Tischer - LaCrosse Police Department

##### Appearances Against

- None.

##### Appearances for Information Only

- None.

##### Registrations For

- Curt Witynski - League of WI Municipalities

##### Registrations Against

- None.

##### Registrations for Information Only

- None.

February 18, 2014      **Executive Session Held**

Present: (9) Representative Bies; Representatives Schraa,  
Brooks, Krug, Thiesfeldt, Kleefisch, Doyle,  
Pasch and Zamarripa.

Absent: (0) None.

Excused: (0) None.

Moved by Representative Doyle, seconded by Representative Krug  
that **Assembly Bill 615** be recommended for passage.

Ayes: (9) Representative Bies; Representatives  
Schraa, Brooks, Krug, Thiesfeldt, Kleefisch,  
Doyle, Pasch and Zamarripa.

Noes: (0) None.

PASSAGE RECOMMENDED, Ayes 9, Noes 0

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Cory Bruce  
Committee Clerk

## Assembly

### Record of Committee Proceedings

#### **Committee on Corrections**

##### **Assembly Bill 615**

Relating to: allowing municipal prisoners to be imprisoned in a bordering county within or outside of the state.

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Absent:     (0)      None.

Excused:   (0)      None.

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- Rep. Jill Billings - 95th Assembly District
- Robert Abraham - LaCrosse Police Department
- Ron Tischer - LaCrosse Police Department

##### Appearances Against

- None.

##### Appearances for Information Only

- None.

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- Curt Witynski - League of WI Municipalities

##### Registrations Against

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##### Registrations for Information Only

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Brooks, Krug, Thiesfeldt, Kleefisch, Doyle,  
Pasch and Zamarripa.

Absent: (0) None.

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that **Assembly Bill 615** be recommended for passage.

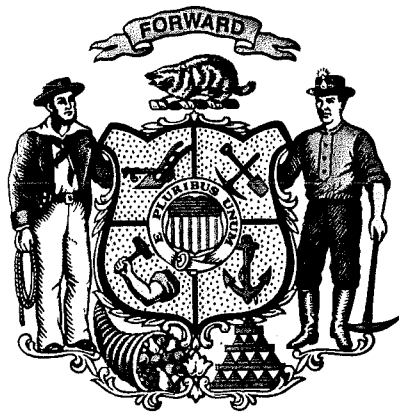
Ayes: (9) Representative Bies; Representatives  
Schraa, Brooks, Krug, Thiesfeldt, Kleefisch,  
Doyle, Pasch and Zamarripa.

Noes: (0) None.

PASSAGE RECOMMENDED, Ayes 9, Noes 0

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Cory Bruce  
Committee Clerk



## Vote Record Committee on Corrections

Date: 2/18/14

Moved by: Doyle

Seconded by: Krug

AB 615 SB \_\_\_\_\_ Clearinghouse Rule \_\_\_\_\_  
 AJR \_\_\_\_\_ SJR \_\_\_\_\_ Appointment \_\_\_\_\_  
 AR \_\_\_\_\_ SR \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

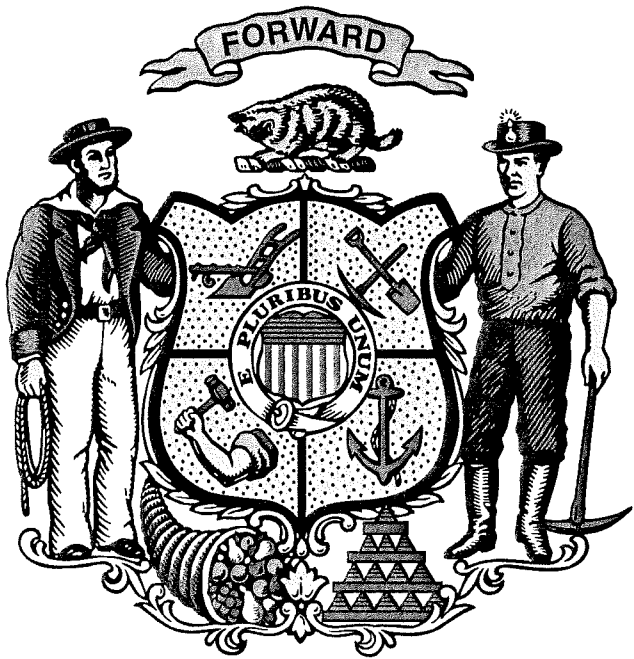
A/S Amdt \_\_\_\_\_  
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 A/S Sub Amdt \_\_\_\_\_  
 A/S Amdt \_\_\_\_\_ to A/S Sub Amdt \_\_\_\_\_  
 A/S Amdt \_\_\_\_\_  
 A/S Amdt \_\_\_\_\_ to A/S Amdt \_\_\_\_\_ to A/S Sub Amdt \_\_\_\_\_

Be recommended for:  
 Passage     Adoption     Confirmation     Concurrence     Indefinite Postponement  
 Introduction     Rejection     Tabling     Nonconcurrence

<u>Committee Member</u>	<u>Aye</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Not Voting</u>
<b>Representative Garey Bies, Chair</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Representative Michael Schraa, Vice Chair</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Representative Edward Brooks</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Representative Scott Krug</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Representative Jeremy Thiesfeldt</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Representative Joel Kleefisch</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Representative Steve Doyle</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Representative Sandy Pasch</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Representative JoCasta Zamarripa</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Totals:</b>	<u>7</u>	_____	_____	_____

Motion Carried

Motion Failed







**Sheriff's Office**  
**County of La Crosse, Wisconsin**

Courthouse & Law Enforcement Center • 333 Vine St • Rm 1500  
La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601-3296  
Administrative Calls: (608) 785-9629 • Fax: (608) 785-5640  
Non-Emergency Dispatch: (608) 785-5942  
Web Site: [www.co.la-crosse.wi.us](http://www.co.la-crosse.wi.us)

**STEVEN J. HELGESON**  
SHERIFF

**JEFFREY A. WOLF**  
CHIEF DEPUTY

TO: Assembly Committee on Corrections  
FROM: La Crosse County Sheriff Steve Helgeson  
RE: Testimony in Support of AB 615  
DATE: February 6, 2014

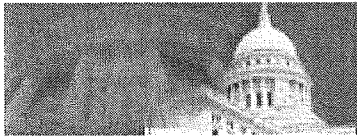
I'd like to thank committee-chair Representative Bies and committee members for the opportunity to speak in support of Assembly Bill 615 today. My name is Steve Helgeson and I am the La Crosse County Sheriff.

I am here to urge passage of AB 615 because the bill will help to address two issues facing La Crosse County. The first is that our county jail has a limited ability to take on more prisoners, and the second is the question of where to house municipal prisoners.

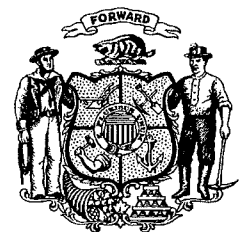
Given the current configuration of the La Crosse County jail at the moment, the jail is at capacity. As a result, we do not have the necessary resources to house municipal prisoners from the city of La Crosse. To do so would mean increased costs related to staff time, bed space, and overall jail administrative expenses. Houston County, however, is in an ideal position to take on these prisoners and is happy to do so. They are even willing to cover the transportation costs associated with taking the municipal prisoners to and from Houston County in Minnesota.

Given the fact that we are presented with this unique solution - whereby Houston County is ready and willing to help La Crosse city and county by taking on our municipal prisoners, I am here today to ask your support AB 615.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this letter of support.



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





**JILL BILLINGS**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

**Testimony in support of Assembly Bill 615**  
**Municipal Prisoners Bill**  
*Assembly Committee on Corrections*  
*February 6, 2014*

I'd like to thank Chairman Bies and the rest of the Committee for holding this public hearing today on AB 615- the Municipal Prisoners Bill. This bill originated from a conversation I had with the City of La Crosse Police Chief regarding an increase in the amount the county charges the city for housing a municipal prisoner in the county jail. According to City of La Crosse Assistant Police Chief Robert Abraham, the fee was increased from \$55 per day, to \$90 per day.

This increase has been particularly hard for the city police department to absorb. However, a neighboring Minnesota County has proposed a solution that is a win-win for all involved - Houston County, in Minnesota, is offering to house La Crosse's municipal prisoners in their county jail at a less expensive rate. Houston County is happy to take our city prisoners because they have the extra room. At the same time, La Crosse County has indicated to me that they have no objection to sending our municipal prisoners across state lines to Houston County, because they have no room in their county jail.

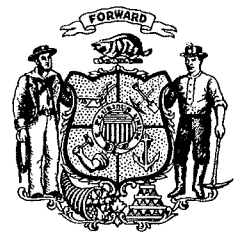
The reason I am here today is that the only thing preventing us from realizing this solution is a current statute. Wisconsin State Statute Section 800.095(1)(b)(3) requires city prisoners be housed in the county where the cause of action arose. My bill, AB 615, would create an exception to the current statute, by adding a subsection to allow a municipal prisoner to be housed in a neighboring county, either inside or outside of Wisconsin, if three criteria are met. The three requirements of AB 615 are:

- 1) The other county borders the county in which the cause of action arose;
- 2) The monthly expenses charged to the municipality by the other county to imprison the defendant are at least 25 percent less than the monthly expenses charged by the county in which the cause of action arose;
- 3) The other county agrees to have the defendant committed to a jail in that county.

Finally, the most important thing to note about AB 615 is that it is purely voluntary. In other words, if sending municipal prisoners to a neighboring county does not result in cost savings, a city can choose to keep their municipal prisoners in their county jail. However, for places like La Crosse, a city that is looking for a less-expensive option for housing municipal prisoners - an answer to our problem lies right next door. AB 615 will make this solution a reality.



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





# Department of Police

RONALD J. TISCHER, CHIEF



TO: Assembly Committee on Corrections  
FROM: La Crosse Police Chief Ronald Tischer  
RE: Testimony in Support of AB 615  
DATE: February 6, 2014

I'd like to thank committee-chair Representative Bies and committee members for the opportunity to speak in support of Assembly Bill 615 today. My name is Ronald Tischer, and I am the City of La Crosse Police Chief.

I am here to urge passage of AB 615 because this bill will help to address issues facing both the City of La Crosse and La Crosse County. It is also my belief that AB 615 will not only help the City of La Crosse, but it has the potential to help other municipalities and counties with prisoner housing issues around our State.

For the City of La Crosse, this will help us financially by saving taxpayer funds in housing our municipal prisoners. In 2013, the cost to municipalities to house a municipal prisoner at the La Crosse County jail nearly doubled. While the La Crosse Municipal Court uses commitment warrants as a last resort in holding people accountable for their actions, the fact is, there will always be those individuals who will refuse to respect the court's decision and warrants will be issued.

In looking at our 2012 municipal prisoners, the City of La Crosse averaged 4.34 prisoners daily at the La Crosse County Jail. Our total cost to house those prisoners was approximately \$79,000. Using those same prisoner numbers under the 2013 cost increase would have cost the City of La Crosse approximately \$124,000 and using those same numbers with our preliminary cost discussions with Houston, County the costs would have been approximately \$77,000.

The City of La Crosse understands that the La Crosse County jail operates at capacity and respects the fact that limited bed space should be reserved for serious criminal offenders in keeping our community safe. This is why both the Sheriff and I agree that AB 615 is in the best interest for everyone.

The City of La Crosse has been in discussions with Houston County, MN who recently completed a new jail project. We were ready to implement a contract with them when we

*"Pursuing Excellence"*

La Crosse Police Department \* 400 La Crosse Street \* La Crosse, WI 54601-3374 \* (608) 789-7201

February 4, 2014

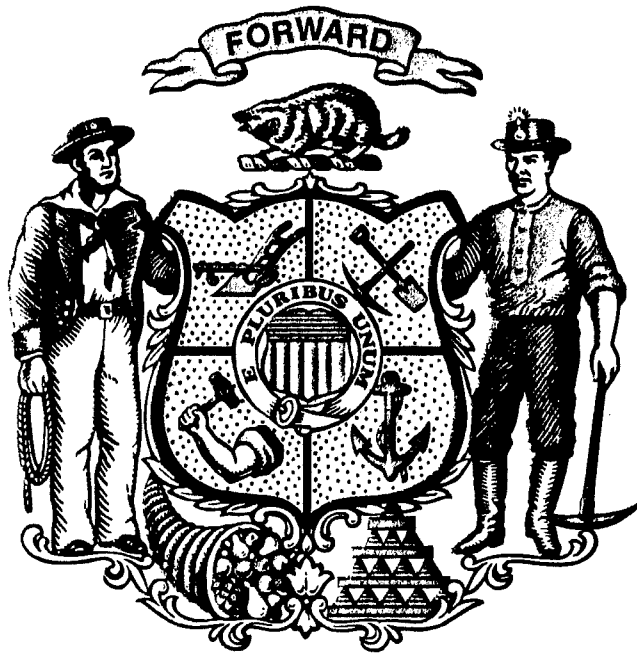
Page 2

discovered the language in State Statute 800.095 which prevented us from doing so. We are also aware that neighboring Monroe County is projected to build a new jail facility. These new facilities have the potential to not only save municipal tax dollars, but also the potential to help with over-crowding issues for county jails that are at capacity and also have the potential to be a source of revenue for new jail facilities who are not at capacity.

The beauty behind AB 615 is that this is a voluntary decision. It does not force an outside county to take prisoners. It provides municipalities with options and it will provide relief to overcrowded county jails.

Currently, counties are allowed to transfer sentenced prisoners to other counties and the State of Wisconsin in the past has transferred sentenced prisoners to other states to house prisoners, all the for the same reasons that municipalities will benefit from AB 615.

With that I will conclude my testimony but I am happy to answer any questions from the committee. Thank you.



AB 615 2/6/14

- What would happen if one of our prisoners became involved in a crime in the jail @ MD? Who's responsible for keeping that prisoner?

- County of origin is responsible for health care

- These are short time stays

- average about 5 days or less

- most are posting bonds to get out.

- other neighboring states?

- border countries would need to begin own agreements