

JOHN SPIROS

State Representative • 86th Assembly District

Assembly Bill 563

January 17, 2018

Testimony from Rep. Spiros

Hello, and thank you Chairman Quinn and members of the Assembly Committee on Science and Technology for allowing me to have the opportunity to share my testimony with you today regarding Assembly Bill 563, which would protect law enforcement with the creation of a Blue Alert in Wisconsin.

Assembly Bill 563, more informally known as the Blue Alert bill, would allow law enforcement agencies to access the state alert network in cases where a law enforcement officer has suffered great bodily harm or death in the line of duty, where a law enforcement officer is missing in connection with his or her official duties, or where there is an imminent and credible threat that a person intends to cause great bodily harm to or the death of a law enforcement officer.

You are all likely familiar with the Amber Alerts and Silver Alerts we already have in the state. This would simply create a Blue Alert using the same infrastructure that is already in place.

This bill doesn't create a mandate on law enforcement, it simply gives them the option of using this alert if they believe it could help avert harm or aid in apprehending an individual.

Overall, this is a very simple bill that could end up saving the lives of law enforcement in our state.

Thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to share testimony in support of this bill, and I welcome any questions.



CHRIS TAYLOR

STATE REPRESENTATIVE ♦ 76th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

**Testimony of Rep. Chris Taylor
Assembly Bill 563**

January 17th, 2017

Chairman Quinn & Members of the Science & Technology Committee:

Thank you for holding a public hearing on Assembly Bill 563, and for the opportunity to testify. AB 563 helps to ensure the safety of our communities and our law enforcement officers by allowing for the timely dissemination of information to the public when a violent, at large criminal makes an imminent threat, or has injured or killed a law enforcement officer.

Also known as a "Blue Alert" system, AB 563 allows a law enforcement agency to access existing infrastructure, the integrated crime alert network, which is administered by the Department of Justice (DOJ) if an alert could help avert harm or aid in apprehending an individual and if:

1. A law enforcement officer has suffered great bodily harm or death;
2. A law enforcement officer is missing; or
3. There is an imminent and credible threat that an individual intends to injure or kill a law enforcement officer.

In 2013, Congress, on a nearly unanimous bipartisan basis, passed the National Blue Alert Act, which facilitates the coordination of states with Blue Alert systems in order to rapidly disseminate information to the public. By becoming the 30th state to pass Blue Alert legislation, Wisconsin gains access to assistance from the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) section of the U.S. Department of Justice in administering this program. Establishing blue alert systems has received overwhelming bipartisan support and has passed in the majority of both red and blue states, including Texas, Kansas, Arizona, California and Washington.

This is straightforward bill with bipartisan support, and I'm hopeful you will support it. I believe this legislation will help protect our law enforcement officers and make communities safer. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Representative Chris Taylor
76th Assembly District