



TERRY MOULTON



WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

23RD SENATE DISTRICT

From: Senator Terry Moulton

To: Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety

Re: Testimony on Senate Bill 42
Relating to: alerts for hit-and-run incidents

Date: February 1, 2016

Good morning Chairman Wanggaard and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony about Senate Bill 42 and hit-and-run incidents in Wisconsin.

The state Department of Justice manages a crime alert network that can be used by law enforcement or state agencies to quickly relay information to the public about certain crimes. The most well-known use of this system is the statewide Amber Alert program, which quickly disseminates information about missing and abducted children.

Senate Bill 42 is modeled after similar programs in other states and would allow law enforcement to use the Department of Justice's statewide crime alert network for certain hit-and-run incidents. Incidents would include cases in which a person has been killed or seriously injured or when additional information about the incident could identify the person or vehicle involved, or in cases where an alert could help avert further harm or could aid in apprehending the person involved.

We feel strongly that this bill will help law enforcement to quickly identify and apprehend those involved in hit-and-run incidents. Thank you for holding today's hearing. Please join me in supporting this legislation.

Serving the 23rd Senate District



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To: Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety

**From: Mike Austin, Government Affairs Director
Wisconsin Department of Justice**

Date: February 1, 2016

Subject: Informational Testimony on Senate Bill 42

Thank you Chairman Wanggaard and committee members for the opportunity to present you with written testimony on Senate Bill 42. The Department of Justice (DOJ) appreciates your thoughtful consideration of this proposal.

DOJ currently operates three similar programs that broadcast information in a similar manner to what is proposed in Senate Bill 42 through the Amber Alert, Silver Alert, and Crime Alert Network.

The Amber Alert system is utilized to disseminate urgent bulletins to the public concerning abducted children. In 2015, there were 5 Amber Alerts issued in Wisconsin. The newly create Silver Alert program was created to protect individuals with Alzheimer's and dementia who go missing. In 2015, there were 74 Silver Alerts issued in Wisconsin. The Crime Alert Network was created in 2010 to give law enforcement officers the ability to send out crime alert bulletins rapidly to businesses and the general public. This subscriber based system issues on average 150 unique alerts each month to individuals and businesses in each county.

The bill as currently proposed would likely result in over 100 Yellow Alerts sent out each year. The Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety has adopted an amendment that would create alerts for only for fatal hit and runs. That would cut down the fiscal impact considerably but not erase it. However, it will still be difficult to determine when to issue an alert if an individual has not been killed at the scene. A victim can often die days after an incident and this would not be an effective tool.

Another concern that has been raised is this new alert could potentially water down other alerts. Under current law these types of fatal hit and run accidents would already be issued through Crime Alert Network. Furthermore, law enforcement will utilize the media in these cases if they know it can be helpful in solving the crime.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to present you with this information while you determine the need for this new Yellow Alert. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.