



# **KEVIN PETERSEN**

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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Chairman Novak and honorable members of the Assembly Committee on Local Government;

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Assembly Bill 569 relating to law enforcement investigative services and making an appropriation.

Specific to law enforcement related issues, when an incident occurs that requires a criminal investigation, the Department of Corrections (DOC) depends on local governments to provide those services at state-owned prisons or juvenile correctional facilities.

Utilizing outside entities to conduct these investigations allows the state to manage potential conflicts of interest and provides the department the capability to manage all of their various facilities across the state. However, it can bear a large burden on our local communities.

The Redgranite Correctional Facility (RGCI) is one of 37 facilities in the state that require investigative services from the local law enforcement agencies in which the facilities reside.

The Village of Redgranite Police Dept. responded to RGCI over 230 times during the last 5 years requiring a law enforcement response and investigative follow-up. The Department of Corrections (DOC) does not currently reimburse the village for any investigative work. This takes a significant amount of staff hours, especially for a village that employs one full-time chief, one full-time officer, and 2 part-time officers.

The DOC currently provides reimbursement for investigative services to both the Dodge County Correctional Facilities and to the Village of Allouez. This legislation will continue those memoranda of understandings (MOU), while expanding reimbursements to all municipalities across the state. This bill establishes that these claims should be reimbursed out of two sum sufficient appropriations.

Under current law, the Department of Corrections must reimburse counties for certain expenses related to an action or proceeding involving a prisoner in a state

prison or a juvenile in a juvenile correctional facility in the county. Assembly Bill 569 adds that;

DOC must also reimburse any county, city, village, or town that provides law enforcement investigative services for an incident involving a prisoner in a state prison or a juvenile in a juvenile correctional facility.

Assembly Bill 569 will provide the needed funding reimbursement for local law enforcement to provide the necessary investigative services to all state correctional facilities, without that cost being picked up by the local residents.



**JOAN BALLWEG**

STATE SENATOR · 14<sup>TH</sup> SENATE DISTRICT

Assembly Bill 569: Law Enforcement Investigative Services and Making an Appropriation  
Testimony of State Senator Joan Ballweg  
Assembly Committee on Local Government  
October 6, 2021

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

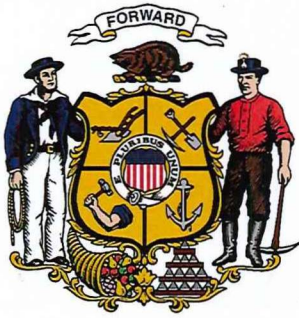
When a situation happens on state correctional facility grounds that is beyond the control of correctional security staff, the Department of Corrections (DOC) calls on local governments to provide first responder and criminal investigative services. Examples of incidents include death investigations, 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 14<sup>th</sup> 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 AB569/SB558 – Law enforcement investigative services and making an appropriation  
Assembly Committee on Local Government  
Wednesday, October 6, 2021**

Thank you Chairperson Novak and committee members for the opportunity to testify in support of 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 many have regarding this bill.

Sincerely,

Paulina Gutiérrez  
Legislative Advisor  
Wisconsin Department of Corrections