



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

**SAMANTHA KERKMAN**

**Assembly Bill 347**

**Battery and Threats to Judges, Prosecutors,  
Public Defenders & Law Enforcement**

Committee on Judiciary  
Thursday, October 1, 2015

Good morning, Chairman Ott and Committee members. Thank you for holding a hearing today on Assembly Bill 347.

Current law prohibits an individual from intentionally causing or threatening bodily harm to a judge or a member of the judge's family if the individual knows that the person harmed or threatened is a judge or judge's family member and the individual causes or threatens harm while the judge is acting in his/her official capacity or in response to the judge's official action. An individual who violates this prohibition is guilty of a Class H felony. The penalty for a Class H felony is a fine of not more than \$10,000, imprisonment for not more than six years, or both.

Much like Assembly Bill 147 which received a public hearing before the Judiciary Committee earlier this year, Assembly Bill 347 expands this prohibition and the penalty for violating it. In addition to protecting judges, prosecutors, law enforcement officers, and the family members of these individuals as in the earlier legislation, Assembly Bill 347 also applies this protection to public defenders and their family members.

Among justice system personnel, public defenders work in closest proximity and with the greatest frequency with potentially dangerous individuals. This makes public defenders particularly vulnerable to acts or threats of harm and is why they and their family members should be included in the changes to bodily security provisions we are considering.



# CODY HORLACHER

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 33<sup>RD</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

(608) 266-5715  
Toll-Free: (888) 529-0033  
Rep.Horlacher@legis.wi.gov

P.O. Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53708-8952

Date: October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015

To: Assembly Committee on Judiciary

From: Representative Cody Horlacher

Re: Assembly Bill 347-battery and threats to a judge, prosecutor, a public defender, or a law enforcement officer and providing a criminal penalty

---

Chairman Ott and Committee Members,

Thank you for holding a public hearing on AB 347, which would provide a criminal penalty for battery and threats to a judge, prosecutor, a public defender, or a law enforcement officer.

This bill is a natural fit to protect those who are working for the public good. This is a common sense piece of legislation that will place all three sectors of the criminal justice system under the same protection.

Judges, prosecutors, public defenders, and law enforcement all work to protect the public and it only makes sense to protect them from battery and threats, as we would protect any citizen in the State of Wisconsin.

This bill would not mandate that those protected report instances of battery and/or threats, this is simply a tool that can be used by those to protect themselves in situations where they feel the threat is legitimate.

I ask for your support of AB 347. This legislation will protect those who protect us. I welcome any questions you may have.