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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**AG Schimel Announces Technical Review of Sexual Assault Kit Testing
Results are Complete; US DOJ Awards Wisconsin DOJ \$1 Million to
Continue Improving System Response to Sexual Assault**

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Brad Schimel’s work to support survivors of sexual assault continues as today he announced the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) has completed reviewing thousands of test results from previously unsubmitted sexual assault kits. Attorney General Schimel also announced that DOJ’s trauma-informed reforms and support for sexual assault victims continue to be supported by U.S. Department of Justice, who awarded DOJ \$1,033,829 to continue Wisconsin’s Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (WiSAKI).

“In less than three years, we have tested and confirmed the results of more than 4,000 sexual assault kits,” said Attorney General Schimel. “These kits sat untested on shelves in hospitals and law enforcement agencies for years. Every week at DOJ we are reviewing many of the returned results, and seeing how we can bring justice to survivors.”

As of August 31, 2018, testing was completed on more than 4,000 previously unsubmitted sexual assault kits. On September 28, the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory (WSCL) completed reviewing all of the testing results.

As testing results are confirmed by the WSCL, if foreign DNA profiles are found in the kit, and the profiles are eligible for upload per FBI standards, the profiles are uploaded into CODIS, the nationwide database of DNA profiles. All lab results are sent to the local law enforcement agency and in some cases, the WiSAKI team at the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) as well. Subsequently, local and DOJ multi-disciplinary teams (which may include prosecutors, law enforcement, and victim

advocates) will work together to review the case for additional investigative work and possible prosecution.

To date, the WiSAKI team at DOJ has reviewed more than 500 cases, and continues to review cases multiple times each week. This case review could include examining police reports, identifying potential safety risks to the public and the victim, identifying legal impediments to a renewed investigation or prosecution such as statute of limitations concerns or plea agreements, and/or whether additional samples are needed from the suspect(s) or consensual partners. Also during this case review, multi-disciplinary teams will discuss notifying the victim. A case review does not guarantee a prosecution or conviction; it only guarantees a review of the information available, and possibly further investigation. To learn more about this process, go to: <https://wisaki.doj.wi.gov/about/after-testing>

In October 2018, DOJ WiSAKI team was awarded more than \$1 million by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) at U.S. DOJ to continue improving the system response to sexual assault. This grant will be used to:

- Leverage the data gathered from the comprehensive testing of SAKs allowing further and more in-depth understanding of the nature and extent of sexual assault crimes around the state and to inform the development of policy interventions needed to respond and;
- Provide local prosecutors with additional resources for training, implementing procedures to collect lawfully owed DNA and for prosecution of cases associated with previously unsubmitted sexual assault kits;
- Support additional analysis work by the state crime lab, which may be necessary for cases that develop from testing previously unsubmitted sexual assault kits.

With other grant funding allocated to DOJ since 2015, the department has utilized the funds to do the following:

- Create a team dedicated to WiSAKI to assist local jurisdictions with victim notification protocols, as well as with investigating and prosecuting cases that may arise from the testing of unsubmitted sexual assault kits: one victim services specialist, two special agents, one assistant attorney general, and one research analyst.
- Complete an inventory of all unsubmitted sexual assault kits at the state's 557 law enforcement agencies and all programs conducting sexual assault forensic exams.
- Test unsubmitted sexual assault kits that have been designated for testing.
- Allocate \$920,000 for sexual assault victim support services and outreach to ensure that local victim advocates have additional resources to provide direct

services to survivors as well as to engage with their colleagues to implement evidence based, victim-centered protocols for responding to sexual assault cases.

- Establish the [By Your Side](#) campaign to provide information and resources to survivors regarding the unsubmitted kits.

WiSAKI is a statewide effort to address the issues surrounding unsubmitted sexual assault kits in the possession of local law enforcement agencies and hospitals in Wisconsin. Initiated by the Attorney General's Sexual Assault Response team (AG SART) and led by DOJ, WiSAKI is a collaborative effort among law enforcement, victim advocates, sexual assault nurse examiners, prosecutors, health care systems, and the WSCL. WiSAKI supports survivors of sexual assault, protects the community, and holds offenders accountable using a trauma-informed, victim-centered approach.

For additional assistance connecting with advocacy and support services, contact the WI Coalition Against Sexual Assault at 608-257-1516 or visit [ByYourSideWI.org](#)

For more information about Attorney General Schimel's efforts to address the accumulation of previously unsubmitted sexual assault kits and to review testing results, go to www.wisaki.wi.doj.gov.