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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Attorney General Kaul Applauds Passage of the Office of School Safety Extended Funding Bill

MADISON, Wis. – After the state Senate voted Tuesday to continue funding the work of the Office of School Safety (OSS), Attorney General Josh Kaul praised the legislators in both houses who passed the bill with overwhelmingly bipartisan support.

“Our Office of School Safety is making a difference in an area of paramount importance: the safety of our kids. That office works to proactively prevent violence in schools and trains educators, students, and staff to recognize and mitigate crises and trauma,” said Attorney General Kaul. “This bill will ensure that the office is able to keep operating through the next state budget and the entirety of the 2024-25 school year, and we look forward to continuing to work with legislators to secure long-term funding for this office.”

The office’s tipline has attracted national attention as it has received more than 11,000 contacts, resulting in opportunities to intervene early, assist youth, and prevent violence. SUSO provides a trusted avenue for students, parents, and community members to contribute to the safety of their schools. Students have used SUSO to seek help for the wellness and safety of themselves or others, reporting concerns such as potential threats of violence, concerns of planned school attacks, incidents of weapons, bullying, suicidal ideation, depression, and self-harm.

The OSS was created in 2018 to keep students safe at school and has become a critical resource for students, teachers, school administrators and communities

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throughout Wisconsin, with the intent to prevent violence in schools and respond quickly to promote recovery, should events occur.

Assembly Bill 1050, authored by Sen. Romaine Quinn (R-Cameron) and Rep. Todd Novak (R-Dodgeville) has now passed both the Assembly and Senate on overwhelmingly bipartisan votes. It extends funding for the operations of OSS through September 2025. This short-term, bridge funding will give the state the opportunity to provide stable, ongoing funding for the OSS as part of the 2025-2027 biennial budget.

Attorney General Kaul thanked the bill's sponsors and supporters.

“Thank you to lead authors Sen. Quinn and Rep. Novak for recognizing the importance of the Office of School Safety for helping to keep schools in Wisconsin safe and for their hard work getting this bill passed,” Attorney General Kaul added. “Thank you as well to the overwhelming bipartisan majority of legislators for their support for this legislation and the work of the Office of School Safety.”

The measure now heads to Gov. Tony Evers for his consideration.