

# House Judiciary Committee Advances Niemerg Bill To Protect Children Giving Court Testimony In Abuse Cases

by Travis Aiken  
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**DIETERICH** – The Illinois House Judiciary Criminal Committee today advanced legislation State Rep. Adam Niemerg (R-Dietrich) is sponsoring to make remote testimony for victims under 13 years of age the standard practice in cases where abuse is alleged.



House Bill 2607 establishes a presumption that the testimony of a victim who is a child under 13 years of age shall testify outside the courtroom and the child's testimony shall be shown in the courtroom by means of a closed circuit television. The presumption could only be removed if the defendant proves the child will not suffer emotional distress by providing testimony in the courtroom.

“I introduced this bill because I find it incredulous that we expect children who are the victims of sexual assault to testify in open court,” Niemerg said. “Sexual predators who sexually abuse children use their roles as adults to intimidate and silence their victims. There is no question testifying in open court about sexual abuse allegations would be traumatic and distressing to children. We must protect our kids.”

Niemerg said he has put in a lot of work to gain some bipartisan support and get the legislation to the House floor.

“I have met with any members on the other side of the aisle willing to talk in order to build support for this legislation,” Niemerg said. “There is nothing more important than ensuring our kids are protected.”

House Bill 2607 has advanced to the House Floor for further consideration.