

Statement in support of AB 19 before  
The Senate Homeland Security, Veterans and Military Affairs and  
Government Reform Committee

Good morning Chairman Brown, and members of this distinguished committee of the Wisconsin State Senate. It is a privilege to be here today representing the nearly 10,000 members of the Army and Air National Guard who are serving our state and nation with distinction. As I speak here today over 2300 of our Wisconsin citizen soldiers and airmen are mobilized to support Operations Enduring Freedom, Noble Eagle, and Iraqi Freedom, protecting the freedoms we enjoy in the greatest state and nation on earth.

I am joined here today by, Deputy Adjutant General -Air, Brig Gen Fred Sloan, my Executive Assistant, Mr. Larry Olson, and our Military Legal Advisor LTC Terry McArdle.

In November of 2001, the entire Wisconsin legislature recognized the need to protect our Wisconsin Guard members called to State Active Duty in support of homeland security missions, assisting in the security of our citizens and airports. Sections 21.75 and 21.80 were created by the 2001 Wisconsin Act 24 and 26 which provides these soldiers and airmen similar protections to the federal Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act and the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights act. These protections are significant and many of your soldiers and airmen have made use of them.

However, another group of Wisconsin Citizens who are serving their nation should also receive the protections of these acts. These are the citizens of Wisconsin who are members of the National Guard of a neighboring state. Since they are guard members of one of these states, they are still subject to being called up to state active duty by the governor of that state, but are NOT afforded the protections I have described above. They deserve and should definitely receive equal protections for the service they provide.

Therefore, we are asking that you consider the swift passage of this bill to provide these protections to all Wisconsin residents who are members of any states national guard, called to state active duty. I thank you for your favorable consideration of this important legislation and we stand ready to answer any questions you may have in this regard.