



JERRY PETROWSKI

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

Senate Bill 231

August 22, 2013

Thank you, members of the committee, for the opportunity to speak today on Senate Bill 231.

This bill is a redraft of 2011 Assembly Bill 320, which was passed by the Assembly Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs last session 11-0. It did not receive a hearing in the Senate, however, and was ultimately never passed into law. The bill makes minor, technical changes to the filing requirements for Marine Corps League corporations with the Department of Financial Institutions.

The Marine Corps League, similar to other veterans organizations, serves to promote the interests, traditions, and ideals of the U.S. Marine Corps and those who served in the Corps. The League operates a number of programs, including the provision of assistance and support to wounded Marines; claims assistance with the federal Department of Veteran Affairs; and promoting physical fitness, drug education and prevention, and scholarship programs for youths.

The National Marine Corps League is designated as a 501 (c)(4) and requires all Marine Corps League organizations, departments and detachments to maintain that status and incorporate as such in their respective states. There are approximately 30 such organizations in Wisconsin. This bill will help the respective state entities satisfy the requirements of the National Marine Corps League.

Wisconsin Statute Chapter 188.15 states that the Adjutant has the same corporate powers as a corporate secretary in matters concerning the legal issues of the Marine Corps League organizations within Wisconsin. This is in conflict with the bylaws of the Marine Corps League, as many Adjutants are “associate” members of the League and are restricted from voting on the election of officers, serving as voting delegates to a convention, or holding any elected office within the League that requires the person to be a “regular” member. A “regular” member must be a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, while there is no service requirement for “associate” members.

This bill makes the necessary changes to state statutes to bring state Marine Corps League detachments into compliance with the national bylaws by allowing the detachment or department senior vice commandant to have the same powers and duties granted to an adjutant.

I would like to thank the committee members for the opportunity to speak on this topic, and would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

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