



Mary Lazich

President
Wisconsin State Senate

**Senate Committee on Transportation and Veterans Affairs
Senate Bill 538
January 14, 2016**

Thank you Chair Petrowski for scheduling Senate Bill 538 (SB 538) a public hearing, and thank you committee members for attention to SB 538. SB 538 provides a necessary fix to streamline the process of creating specialty plates.

Current law allows non-profit groups to apply to the Department of Transportation (DOT) for specialty license plates. The specialty plate is merely a license plate and may not be used for fundraising efforts.

Specialty plates that include fundraising for a group are enumerated by the legislature.

SB 538 would allow groups to apply to DOT for a specialty license plate for fundraising purposes. The process to obtain specialty plates, with \$25.00 going to a group, would start with an application, a deposit of \$15,500, and a petition with 500 signers interested in purchasing the plate. After the application is completed, the DOT posts the application on its website for thirty days for public review. If objections are not raised, the plate is approved. If there is an objection, the plate moves to the legislature's transportation committees for passive review.

To avoid a build-up of underutilized plates, the bill allows the discontinuation of any specialty plate issued at the time the number of registrations falls below 500. Groups have three years from the issuance to reach the 500 plate threshold.

SB 538 simplifies the specialty license plates process for DOT and significantly decreases legislative involvement.

I ask the committee approve SB 538. Thank you for your attention.



Wisconsin Department of Transportation

www.dot.wisconsin.gov

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DATE: January 14, 2016

TO: Members, Senate Committee on Transportation and Veterans Affairs
The Honorable Jerry Petrowski, Chair

FROM: Tom Rhatican, Assistant Deputy Secretary
Wisconsin Department of Transportation

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 538 (special distinguishing registration plates issued by DOT)

Chairman Petrowski and Committee Members:

I would like to provide some important background information as you consider 2015 Wisconsin Senate Bill 538 (SB 538). SB 538 makes a number of changes to the process and requirements for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) to designate authorized special groups and issue special vehicle registration plates to group members. The Department has no position on SB 538.

Special License Plates in Wisconsin – Current Law

The Department currently offers a total of 112 special group license plates, including 56 different variations of military plates and an additional 56 specialty plate variants. This total also includes the three new special plates enumerated in Wisconsin Statutes during the 2013-14 legislative session: Law Enforcement Memorial; Trout Unlimited; and In God We Trust.

Under the existing process for designating authorized special groups, there are two different authorization processes for fundraiser plates and non-fundraiser plates.

I. Fundraising License Plates

Currently in Wisconsin, there are 14 fundraising license plates. Under current law, a fundraising license plate must be enumerated in state statute and, thus, cannot be created under the existing process outlined in the Administrative Code.

II. Non-Fundraising License Plates

Non-fundraising plates are either enumerated in state statute or created under the existing process specified in the administrative code. Thus far, only two groups have been designated authorized special groups and have had authorized special group plates: Lao Veterans and Freemasons.

A. *Administrative Code Applications - Eligibility*

The group must meet all of the following criteria specified in s. 341.14(6r)(fm)1., Wis. Stats., to be designated an authorized special group:

1. The group or organization is not organized or operated for profit.
2. The group or organization is not a political committee, as defined in s. 11.01 (4), or a political group, as defined in s. 11.01 (10).
3. The group or organization is not a church, a synagogue, a mosque or any organization, whether or not organized under ch. 187, that operates under a creed.
4. The group or organization does not promote, practice or encourage hatred or any form of discrimination.
5. The group or organization does not carry connotations offensive to good taste or decency, or that would be misleading, or in conflict with the enumeration or designation of any other authorized special group.

B. *Administrative Code Applications - Fee Deposit:*

The group must submit a fee deposit of \$15,500 with the Department. WisDOT keeps \$3,500 for costs associated with data processing, and will refund the group \$15 multiplied by the number of plates sold during the first year, up to \$12,000 (this would represent 800 plates sold during the first year of plate sales).

New Process for Authorizing Special Groups and Issuing Special License Plates

SB 538 makes various modifications to the process and requirements for WisDOT to designate authorized special groups and issue special plates to group members, which include the following:

- Requires an application for designation as an authorized special group to include at least 500 signatures from Wisconsin residents who affirm their intent to obtain special plates associated with the group, once these plates become available.
- Eliminates the prohibition that the Department may not assist in fundraising efforts – allowing fundraiser plates and non-fundraiser plates to use this special group designation process.
- Requires the special group application to include a payment to WisDOT of \$15,500 for the Department's initial costs of production of the special plates, and eliminates the provision that the applicant is entitled to a partial refund based on the number of special plates issued in the first year.

➤ *Application Process*

- Under this proposal, DMV would no longer have to authority to deny applications for authorized special groups. DMV would merely facilitate the application process, which the bill specifies as follows:
 1. The process begins with DMV receiving a completed authorized special group application. Applications must include the following: 1) Payment of \$15,500; and 2) Signatures of 500 residents on a form prescribed by the Department.
 2. After receiving the completed application, a notice of application will be posted on the Department's website. The notice identifies the group applying for designation and describes the process by which a resident of this state may object to the designation.
 3. Any resident of this state may object to the designation within 30 days after the Department's notice.
 - a. The objection must be submitted by writing to WisDOT in a manner prescribed by the Department.
 - b. Objections to the designation of a group as an authorized group may be based on grounds stipulated in the bill or other grounds.
 4. If no objection is received after 30 days, the Department will designate the group as an authorized special group. If WisDOT does receive a timely objection, the Department will refer the application to the respective transportation standing committees in each house of the legislature.
 - a. If the chairperson of each standing committee does not notify the Department within 14 days that the committee has scheduled a meeting to review the application, the application is approved.
 - b. If within 14 days the chairperson of either standing committee notifies the Department that the committee has scheduled a meeting for the purpose of reviewing the application, the application is only approved if each standing committee designates the group as an authorized special group.
 5. If an application is approved, DMV will then have one year to complete the development of the new special plate. If an application is denied, the Department will return the payment to the group.

For additional information on Wisconsin specialty license plates, visit: wisconsindmv.gov.

If you have any questions, please contact me or Nate Yahn, WisDOT legislative advisor, at (608) 266-1114.



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TO: Chairperson Petrowski and Members of the Senate Transportation and Veterans Affairs Committee

FROM: Gina Dennik-Champion, MSN, RN, MSHA
Executive Director Wisconsin Nurses Association

DATE: January 14, 2016

RE: Support of SB 538 - Relating to: special distinguishing registration plates issued by the Department of Transportation and making appropriations.

Thank you Senator Petrowski and Members of the Senate Transportation and Veterans Affairs Committee for scheduling a hearing on SB 538. SB 538 provides for a modification of the processes and requirements for the Department of Transportation regarding the designation of authorized special groups. SB 538 also issues special motor vehicle registration plates to those authorized special group members.

My name is Gina Dennik-Champion and I am the Executive Director of the Wisconsin Nurses Association. The Wisconsin Nurses Association supports efforts that can have a significant impact on the sustainability of a nursing workforce for the future. In the 2014 RN Workforce Report, nurses reported that the cost of tuition and fees is the top barrier to nursing education across all regions. One such effort that WNA actively supports is the concept of providing educational scholarships to nurses using the fees collected through the issuing of a special license plate. WNA believes that SB 538 is a mechanism that can increase the nursing supply, visibility, and pride regarding the nursing profession throughout the state.

WNA views SB 538 as a bill that can also assist other groups who support similar initiatives that increase the role of the Department of Transportation. WNA wishes to extend sincere thanks to Senator Mary Lazich for her sponsorship of SB 538 and to you Chairperson Petrowski for your co-sponsorship and allowing this hearing today. We ask that SB 538 earns the support of all of the members of this Committee, and request a swift passage.

I would like to answer any questions you may have.

Reference: Wisconsin 2014 Registered Nursing Survey Report, July 2015. Wisconsin Center for Nursing.
www.wicenterfornursing.org

Testimony for Public Hearing
Senate Committee on Transportation and Veterans Affairs
January 14, 2016

Janis K. Bauman
525 Evergreen Trail
Portage, WI 53901

S.B. No. 538(Committee on Transportation and Veterans Affairs) - License Plate Fix Bill

Good Morning Chairman and Committee Members,

My name is Jan Bauman and I am Chief Nurse Executive for Divine Savior Healthcare in Portage and a member of the Wisconsin Organization of Nurse Executives. I am here in support of the License Plate Fix Bill.

We have been working with Senator Lazich since 2011 to advance a license plate for nurses, our organization has devoted countless hours of preparation, planning, networking and collaboration with legislators to focus on this license plate. To bring this bill to fruition would impact the nurses in Wisconsin in multiple ways. It will give us a strategy for raising fund for nursing education, professional development and scholarships. It can expand the opportunities for nurses to lead collaborative improvement efforts in population health, as well as assist in ensuring nurses engage in lifelong learning.

The cost for advanced nursing degrees can be cost-prohibitive, and therefore missing opportunities for nurses to fill critical positions such as educators, advanced practice nurses, CRNA's and nurse executives.

We are confident we can meet the requirements of the bill, we have partnered with WNA (Wisconsin Nurses Association) and many other nursing organizations who have endorsed the license plate bill and committed to its promotion. There are approximately 95,000 RN's, LPN's, and student nurses across our state and therefore we are confident we can meet the minimal purchase threshold of 500.

Thank you for your valuable time and consideration of this very important bill.

Sincerely,



Janis K. Bauman