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April 25th, 2017

Chairman Ripp and Transportation Committee Members,

Thank you for holding a Public Hearing on AB 185 related to repealing a rule of the Department of Transportation related to the purchase of school transportation.

AB 185 is a commonsense bill that reduces government regulation and allows school bus purchasers to operate more effectively and efficiently.

This bill eliminates an unnecessary and burdensome regulation regarding the purchase of school buses that are more than five years old and have been previously titled and registered in another state.

This introduction section was included in the administrative rule section that was promulgated by the Department of Transportation in 1995 as part of a new section of regulations specifically focused on purchasers of school buses for student transportation. There have been no substantive changes to this rule since 1995. This rule prevents purchasers from competitively bidding to purchase school buses and should be removed.

AB 185 does not make any changes to the safety requirements related to the operation of school buses in the State of Wisconsin. Any purchaser that purchases a bus would be required to fulfill all the current safety requirements before operating that bus in Wisconsin.

Several bus company owners as well as school district business managers have reached out to my office in support of this legislation. By eliminating this provision we can allow purchasers to buy buses from warmer climates, which have a longer lifespan. This also saves money through the competitive bidding process, allowing districts or purchasers to reinvest those dollars in other areas. This overly burdensome regulation needs to be removed and this bill does just that.

I appreciate your consideration of this bill and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.



DEVIN LEMAHIEU

STATE SENATOR

DATE: April 25, 2017
RE: Testimony on 2017 Assembly Bill 185
TO: The Assembly Committee on Transportation
FROM: Senator Devin LeMahieu

Chairman Ripp and committee members, thank you for taking time today to discuss Assembly Bill 185, that repeals a Department of Transportation rule, related to the purchase of school buses for school transportation.

A DOT rule prohibits the purchase of an out-of-state school bus used in the transportation of students if the bus is over five years old. Assembly bill 185 eliminates this prohibition removing an onerous and burdensome regulation placed on consumers. This proposal does not remove any of the safety regulations placed on school buses. All buses must still be inspected and approved before they can be used to transport students.

The current rule prevents buyers from competitively bidding to purchase school buses. This bill reduces government regulation and allows school bus purchasers to operate more effectively and efficiently while upholding Wisconsin's school bus safety standards.

Thank you for your consideration.

My name is Georgia Kraus and I am the Superintendent, Elementary Principal and transportation director for the School District of Gilman, a small rural district.

This past year we were told that it did not make sense to put more money to repair the body work for our mini-bus. Our Head Custodian began looking for options. We found that a new mini-bus with a chair lift would be about \$85,000. Our Head Custodian began looking for used options.

There was nothing in the area that fit our needs, a small bus with a chair lift. He called a company in Ohio and found a bus that was in a reasonable price range and fit our needs. Then the salesperson asked where he was from he said Wisconsin. He said I am sorry but we can not sell to you. Wisconsin and Maryland are the only two states in the country that have such a ban. In order to sell us the bus he would have strip all of the lights and paint it white. Obviously this defeated the purpose of us making the purchase. We are a small rural district that has worked very hard to be conservative with our funds. Repealing this rule to allow school buses to be purchased out of state could give us a cost effective option for safe transport of our students.

Thank you for your consideration. If I may be of service please do not hesitate to contact me at school 715-447-8211 or gkraus@gilman.k12.wi.us