



JERRY PETROWSKI

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

Senate Bill 502 – *Waiver of fees in an emergency*

December 7, 2017

Good morning Mr. Chairman and committee members, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 502 which would authorize the Governor to waive fees for replacement of government credentials during a declared state of emergency.

This summer saw significant severe weather across Wisconsin, causing widespread destruction of property. State departments responded to this by sending representatives to help with the cleanup and transition back into daily life for residents. In an effort to ease this transition, one of the first steps was making sure residents had their identification cards and driver's licenses to do the everyday tasks like going to the grocery store or the bank. In Barron County, the DMV opened a temporary service center for those affected by storms to reissue driver's licenses, vehicle titles, and ID cards for free.

Under current law, state departments are not authorized to waive fees required to replace permits, licenses, approvals, or other authorizations. Therefore, the organizations were not in compliance at the time. This bill would change that law and allow the governor to waive any fees required for replacement of already-existing permits and licenses for residents during a declared state of emergency (new permits and licenses will still require a fee).

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on this bill, and I would be happy to answer any questions.

29TH SENATE DISTRICT

STATE CAPITOL: P.O. BOX 7882 • MADISON, WISCONSIN 53707-7882
SEN.PETROWSKI@LEGIS.WISCONSIN.GOV • TELEPHONE: (608) 266-2502 • FAX: (608) 282-3569



Romaine Quinn

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 75th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

12/07/2017

Committee on Government Operations, Technology and Consumer Protection

Chairman Stroebel and members of the committee:

Thank you for holding a hearing on Senate Bill 502, which allows the governor to waive certain fees for license, approvals, or other authorizations in the wake of natural disaster that leads to a state of emergency being declared.

I'm sure that many of you saw the headlines from my district and many others last summer – severe storms caused significant damage across the state of Wisconsin. As crews scrambled to restore power, water, and communications, many Wisconsinites were also scrambling to replace documents that had been destroyed in the storms – documents such as driver's licenses. We often forget how crucial these basic documents are, but the storms were a reminder.

In an effort to ease this transition, the Barron County Division of Motor Vehicles opened a temporary service center for those affected by the storm, reissuing drivers' licenses, vehicle titles, and ID cards for free.

However, current state law does not allow any agency to waive a fee for these documents, regardless of the circumstances. This put the DMV out of compliance with state law. This bill is a humanitarian gesture to recognize that in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, Wisconsinites should not worry about combing through the debris to find their wallets before getting their drivers' licenses replaced. Once the governor has declared a state of emergency, he should also be able to give the relevant departments a waiver on charging fees.

It is important to note that this bill only applies to the reissue of permits and licenses – new documents will still have a fee attached.

Thank you, and I'm happy to answer any questions.