

# JERRY PETROWSKI

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

## *Senate Bills 399 & 410*

October 30, 2019

Thank you, Madam Chairwomen and members of the committees, for the opportunity to provide testimony today on Senate Bill 399 and Senate Bill 410, bills that will help summer camps across our state that are enjoyed by thousands of Wisconsin kids every year. I appreciate the Senate and Assembly committees convening in a joint session today to hear these bills that will make summer youth camp a safer and more enjoyable experience for those kids.

We are blessed with beautiful summers in Wisconsin. From our pristine lakes to our abundant forests and wildlife, Wisconsin -- especially northern Wisconsin -- is "God's Country" and the perfect setting for youth to learn about nature, enjoy outdoor activities, build friendships that will last a lifetime, and grow as a person. This summer camp experience is not just a yearly ritual, but something that thousands of kids look forward to each and every summer.

Two of the bills before you today help to streamline the process of allowing doctors and nurses to be an important part of the safety of children at these summer camps. Currently, doctors and nurses who volunteer at these camps are subject to repetitive and burdensome regulations. These health experts are required to fill out incredible amounts of paperwork and forms to qualify for these mostly volunteer opportunities.

The majority of ailments that occur at summer camps are those you would expect from kids playing outside: twisted ankles, scraped knees, bee stings, or rashes from poison ivy. While usually not life threatening, it's very comforting to parents to know that there is medical assistance available at the camp should their child need it.

These bills allow for doctors and nurses who are properly licensed in other states -- and verified by the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services -- to administer their services on a temporary basis at licensed "recreational and educational camps." It's important to note that some camps have had difficulty securing medical professionals in the past because of the

29TH SENATE DISTRICT

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regulations for allowing doctors or nurses who are licensed outside of Wisconsin to be a part of this summer experience. Do they practice medicine so differently in faraway places like Minnesota, Michigan, and Iowa, for example, that medical professionals licensed and credentialed in those states shouldn't be allowed to tender non-emergency medical care at summer camps?

Further, in addition to the doctors and nurses having to be licensed and verified, the physicians would be covered by medical malpractice insurance and the camps would be liable for civil action, just as the current process for Wisconsin-licensed medical experts. Additionally, should a camper require acute medical care, the medical professional on duty simply is not prepared to perform major procedures at the camp and the sick or injured individual would have to be transported to a medical facility regardless of where the doctor is licensed. To date, I have not heard any objections from the Medical Society of Wisconsin or the Wisconsin Hospital Association to either of these bills.

I also want to mention that the authors have offered amendments to both bills that moves the date that the Medical Examining Board will have to promulgate rules from May 1, 2020 to May 1, 2121. The Department of Safety and Professional Services reached out to our offices to ask that, given that we are in October of 2019 already, we consider moving the date by a year to give them more time to develop rules. That reasonable request is reflected in that simple amendment which we hope will be approved and attached to both bills as they are voted out of committee.

Again, thank you again for the opportunity to speak on this bill. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.



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# GAE MAGNAFICI

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 28<sup>th</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

## **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF AB 458**

Good Afternoon Chairwoman Vander Meer, Chairwoman Bernier, and members of the Committee, and thank you for taking the time to hear my testimony today.

In Wisconsin, we're fortunate to have some of the most pristine summer camps the world has to offer. These overnight camps, operating throughout the state, provide young men and women with invaluable experiences that help them grow mentally, physically, and socially. For many children, summer camps offer the first opportunity to spend time away from a city and be surrounded by nature. As our society continues to become more attached to social media and smart phones, summer camps and the experiences they provide are becoming more important.

As with any outdoor activity, injuries sometimes occur at summer camps. As a former pediatric nurse, I know the quality of care that nurses provide for children, and the peace of mind that parents have knowing that their children are in safe hands. Qualified nurses that wish to provide their valuable services to a summer camp should be able to do so without needing to go through the current time-consuming procedures of temporary licensure in Wisconsin. Overnight summer camps face a myriad of challenges to continue safe and successful operation, and extensive compliance efforts to ensure the safety of their children should not be one of them.

AB 458 will allow registered nurses in good standing in another state, US territory, or foreign country to practice as a nurse at a summer camp in Wisconsin for up to 90 days per year if the licensure standards in that jurisdiction that the nurse is licensed are substantially equivalent to the requirements of Wisconsin. Registered nurses operating under this exemption would be limited to treating campers and camp staff only. This legislation will help ensure that camps across our state have the resources they need to continue providing this valuable service to Wisconsin families.

I'm proud to be an author of this bill and to support the safe and efficient operation of our state's summer camps.

Thank you again for taking the time to hear my testimony, and I'd be happy to answer and questions.



# NORTH STAR CAMP FOR BOYS

EST. 1945

October 30, 2019

Wisconsin Legislature  
P.O. Box 7882  
Madison WI 53707

Dear members of the Wisconsin Legislature;

My name is Andy Shlensky and I am the owner and director of North Star Camp for Boys in Hayward, Wisconsin. This summer was North Star's 75th summer in operation and we are anticipating campers and staff to travel to Hayward from over 25 states and 15 countries to enjoy the Northwoods of Wisconsin. I am asking for your support for all of the bills in this legislative package.

### **AB 428/SB 399 (Physicians) & AB 458/SB 410 (Nurses)**

Many camps like ours rely on volunteer doctors and nurses to oversee the health and wellness of our camp community. With many of these health care staff traveling in from out of state, their options for obtaining a license do not seem to fit the situation.

For physicians, the requirements of the temporary license, including the paperwork and examination process, has proven it can take up to six months. They also have the option of obtaining a permanent Wisconsin license, which involves almost the same process as the temporary one, but requires as many hours of continuing education than the hours that they are practicing in their one week of volunteering. These hurdles have caused us to have a shortage of doctors willing and able to volunteer at camp. With each of these physicians licensed in their own state and subject to the standards of continuing education and updated background checks, I ask for your support of Assembly Bill 428/Senate Bill 399 to help keep our campers safe. This would bring Wisconsin in line with other states like Minnesota and Maine who also have rich traditions in camping in streamlining the licensing process.

The nursing compact has gone a long way in streamlining the process for nurses, but there are still tremendous gaps in place that make it unnecessarily difficult to find the nurses we need to care for our kids. With so many campers coming together in Wisconsin camps, and many camps focusing on special medical needs, it is imperative that we as camps can run full national searches for the best healthcare available for our kids. Assembly Bill 458 and Senate Bill 410 will close that hole and allow us to find qualified nursing staff to provide campers across Wisconsin with the care they deserve.

Though we're mostly treating jammed fingers and skinned knees, having quality healthcare staff at camp allows us to provide our campers and staff with the optimal level of medical supervision during their campers and staff. Thank you for your support in reforming this process to help keep our campers safe.

Andy & Vickie Shlensky, Directors  
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**AB 435/SB 396 - Camp Building Codes**


Having built two new buildings over the past five years, I know firsthand that with camp buildings we are currently trying to squeeze square pegs into a round hole. Camp buildings are seasonal, meant for rustic facilities and adventure programming. Meanwhile, the code as it stands leaves the Department of Safety and Professional Services trying to determine if camp buildings should be built to school codes or amusement park standards, knowing that camps are neither. Our camp buildings are occupied during only a 2-month window and have no plumbing or HVAC. They are designed to be kept as primitive structures, yet maintaining them as such is often impossible because of the constraints of the current code. This bill will allow us to work with DSPS to find a common sense approach to applying the code to camp buildings.

**AB 437/SB 394 - Electronic Medical Records**

This bill will allow camps, responsible for the health and wellbeing of tens of thousands of children annually in Wisconsin, to use the most up to date practices with electronic health records. The requirement that the system “documents each change to the health record and that does not allow previous changes to the health record to be edited or deleted” ensures the integrity of the data while the expanded technological capabilities allow for increased mechanisms to keep campers safe.

We are very proud of the history and tradition of our Wisconsin camps and appreciate the willingness of the State of Wisconsin to work together with the camps to ensure that children from around the state and all over the world can come together for safe, enriching experiences at our Wisconsin camps.

Thank you,



Andy Shlensky

## **Midwest Association of Camps Summer Camp Recreational Reform Package**

Midwest Association of Camps (MAIC) represents hundreds of camps across Wisconsin that serve thousands of kids from around the world every summer. These camps bring in millions in tourist dollars and showcases rural Wisconsin. A recreational and educational camp is **defined** as a premise, including temporary and permanent structures, that is operated as an overnight living quarters where both food and lodging or facilities for food and lodging are provided for children or adults or both children and adults for a planned program.

### **CURRENT STATUS:**

Camps in Wisconsin typically only operate 8 out of 52 weeks a year. Wisconsin's building codes mostly contain provisions for dwellings and commercial buildings. The codes aren't nimble enough to adjust to the limited use of camps. Their buildings have unique and limited uses and populations.

Physicians and nurses that volunteer in camps are subject to onerous regulations and applications that take more time to obtain than the length that they volunteer. Finding physicians and nurses to go through the regulatory process is difficult.

### **Proposed Legislation:**

A bipartisan package of bills to realign Wisconsin camp regulation with best practices around the country.

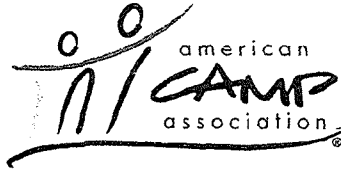
**SB 399/AB 428 – Doctors at Camps** (Edming/Petrowski) Allows licensed physicians from other states to practice limited medicine as a volunteer at a camp for up to 90 days with an expedited application process.

**SB 410/AB 458 – Nurses at Camp** (Petrowski/Magnafici) Allows nurses from other states to practice limited medicine as a volunteer at a camp for up to 90 days with an expedited application process.

**SB 396/ AB 435 – Camp Regulation** (Felzkowski/Tiffany) Sets building standards for recreational and educational camps, through the rule-making process at the Department of Safety and Professional Services

**SB 394/ AB 437 – Camp Health Records** (Oldenburg/Tiffany) Electronic health records at recreational and educational camps

**SB328/ AB353 –Camp Inspections** (James/Bernier) Allow DATCP to waive annual inspections for not more than two out of every three years at their discretion if they feel the camp has exhibited effective managerial control of public health hazards.



October 29, 2019

Wisconsin Legislature  
P.O. Box 7882  
Madison, WI 53707

Regarding: AB353/SB328, AB428/SB399, AB458/SB410, AB437/SB394, AB435/SB396

Dear Members of the Wisconsin Legislature,

First and foremost, I would like to thank the Wisconsin legislature for its continuing support of youth development and education through the field of camp. We are very proud of the history and tradition of Wisconsin camps and appreciate the willingness of the State of Wisconsin to work together to ensure that all children, youth and adults from around the state and all over the world can come together for physically and emotionally safe, educational experiences at Wisconsin Camps.

A number of states have adopted ACA Accreditation standards within their regulatory framework and we strongly believe there is great public benefit for all states to incorporate ACA accreditation in this way.

It has come to our attention that you may have received correspondence from individuals who may have represented that their position on the aforementioned bills represented the position of the American Camp Association. While we greatly value the individual voice of our over 12,000 members, no one can speak for the Association other than the Board of Directors or the Association CEO on behalf of the Board of Directors.

The American Camp Association (ACA) is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit membership association of camps and camp professionals, who, for more than 100 years, have joined together to share their knowledge and experience the growth and quality of camp programs. The mission of the ACA is enriching the lives of children, youth and adults through the camp experience. The Association works hard to provide quality professional development services, research, accreditation services, and advocacy for children, youth and adults throughout our nation. For over 70 years, the American Camp Association has been the only independent national accrediting body for camp operations in the United States, focusing primarily on health, safety and risk management. In all 50 states, ACA Accredited Camps™ are a parent's best assurance that a camp has meet the foundational standards of the field of camp. Administered through a peer-review process, ACA's Accreditation program is not intended to circumvent the licensure required to operate a camp but assures that current practices at the camp reflect the most up-to-date, research-based standards in camp operation.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at 765-349-3308 or [trosenberg@acacamps.org](mailto:trosenberg@acacamps.org) if I can answer any questions or be more helpful.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom Rosenberg".

Tom Rosenberg  
President/CEO

American Camp Association

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**CHIPPEWA RANCH CAMP** | EST.  
1946

Chippewa Ranch Camp  
8258 County O Road  
Eagle River, WI 54521

October 30, 2019

Hello. Thank you for the opportunity. My name is Cliff Lissner, and since 2005 my wife and I have owned and operated Chippewa Ranch Camp, which is a residential summer camp for girls in Eagle River, WI. The camp has been in operation since 1946, and we bring in campers from all over the United States (majority being from the local midwest). At Chippewa our girls learn independence, problem solving skills and how to return as productive and valuable members to their own communities. We find it to be our great responsibility to pick up where schools leave off in the way of social development, and the teaching of kindness, integrity, confidence and fortitude. In today's world we view camps like ours as both an escape from the social pressures of school and home, as well as a platform for teaching children to thrive with confidence in those very environments. Camps like ours teach girls empowerment, we teach boys compassion, and we offer them safe and healthy communities to learn, grow and develop critical skills that they'll maintain for the rest of their lives.

Camps bring a host of economic benefits to both local and distant Wisconsin communities, and we take pride in the significant impact that we have on the continued growth of summer tourism, seasonal job development, and the intangible, nostalgic experience that summer camps bring to the state. Campers and staff members from all over the world leave each summer with fond memories of not just their camp experiences, but also the beauty and peacefulness of the natural and cherished landscape upon which those camps sit. They leave with an unwavering appreciation and love for the state of Wisconsin. They long for the opportunity to return once again, and to one day bring their own families to enjoy the lakes, forests and towns that so captured their imaginations growing up.

Thank you.



## The Bills In Question:

### AB 428/SB 399

We (like many camps in Wisconsin) rely on volunteer doctors to work with other medical professionals to help keep our campers & staff healthy and safe. Unfortunately, the current process for camp doctors to become licensed in our state is a barrier for many. With excessive paperwork & testing, the process can often take up to 6 months.

We need this bill because the current law makes it difficult and very time consuming for volunteer doctors to obtain a Wisconsin license. Most of these doctors spend 1 week at camp and our fear is that more doctors will stop volunteering because of the difficulty in obtaining a license.

The safety and care of our campers is our main priority and having an easier path for volunteer doctors to care for our children would help us keep our campers and staff healthy and safe.

### AB 458/SB 410

Similar to the above reasons for volunteer doctors, the excessive red tape our nurses face often causes camps to go without proper health care staff. We would prefer that camps be able to obtain the health care staff that they need so that campers in Wisconsin are able to be as safe as possible. This bill will help ensure the health and safety of campers and staff at Wisconsin camps.

### AB 435/SB 396

Camp buildings are occupied for 8 weeks and most have no water or heat sources. These primitive structures typically don't fit into the current code and camps are often forced to conform to costly and time consuming requirements in order to make simple safety updates. Unfortunately this results in many camps choosing not to fix what would be simple issues due to excessive cost/unnecessary requirements that don't fit the structure. We need this bill to create a narrow rule that applies only to seasonal rec ed camps so that a common sense approach can be taken when updating or building new structures.

### AB 437/SB 394

Most hospitals and clinics moved to electronic records years ago. Maintaining a paper book is outdated and not common practice for most nurses. More importantly it can be easily lost or misplaced. Electronic records are not easily lost and the system is one which nursing staff are already familiar. There has also been much confusion among inspectors on what constitutes a "bound book"

We need this bill to help keep our campers and staff at camp by staying in line with best practices in the health care industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Gabe Chernov and I am the owner and director of Birch Trail Camp, a summer camp for children in Minong, WI. We serve campers from across the United States and have a large economic impact on our rural community. Camps like ours contribute greatly to the Northwoods economy through job creation, real estate taxes, food budget, services and goods from vendors, insurance, parents visiting weekend items like hotels, meals and shopping and so much more.

The benefits of summer camp for our campers include Social Skills Development such as leadership, communication and participation, Character Building such as responsibility and resilience and Community Living such as citizenship and trustworthiness. Our staff build skills for their careers. They learn flexibility and adaptability, as they work with a variety of people ranging from children to camp directors. They show initiative and problem-solving when any unexpected circumstances arise. They are exposed to a multi-cultural community of both campers and counselors and understand what it means to build a caring, supportive community. They demonstrate accountability as they work to keep children safe and happy. But more than all of this, they gain a sense of self-fulfillment when they see their campers try new activities, reach their goals, and grow in confidence.

I would like to take a moment to address the bills and why they are needed.

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I would be happy to address any questions, thank you for your time,