



# TOM TIFFANY

STATE SENATOR • 12TH SENATE DISTRICT

**Testimony on Senate Bill 396/Assembly Bill 435 and Senate  
Bill 394/Assembly Bill 437  
Senate Committee on Elections, Ethics and Rural Issues and  
Assembly Committee on Rural Development  
October 30, 2019**

Thank you, Chairwoman Bernier, Chairwoman VanderMeer, and members for holding a joint public hearing on Senate Bill 396/Assembly Bill 435 and Senate Bill 394/Assembly Bill 437. I would like to thank Representatives Mary Felzkowski for her leadership on this package of bills and Representative Oldenburg for his work on Senate Bill 394/Assembly Bill 437.

There are a number of recreational and educational summer camps across Wisconsin, and the 12<sup>th</sup> Senate District is home to several. Students from all over the country and beyond travel to Wisconsin to enjoy our natural resources, visit our state parks and popular tourist destinations, and spend time in our local communities. I'm proud to co-author two Summer Camp Regulatory Reform bills that are before you today.

Senate Bill 396/Assembly Bill 435 requires the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DPS) to revise the commercial building code to establish separate standards for these recreational and educational camps. The reason for this is because these camps are regulated as many different entities from education centers to restaurants. Our hope is to allow DPS to take into account the uniqueness and uses of these camps.

Senate Bill 394/Assembly Bill 437 allows for electronic record keeping for health records at recreational and educational camps. Modernizing the way records are maintained at the camp will be a welcome reform for camp staff involved with records management.

Thank you again, Chairwomen Bernier and VanderMeer, and members for hearing these bills, and I'm happy for any follow up questions anytime.



# MARY FELZKOWSKI

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## **Testimony on Assembly Bill 435/ Senate Bill 396**

Assembly Committee on Rural Development  
Senate Committee on Elections, Ethics and Rural Issues  
Representative Mary Felzkowski  
35<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
November 30, 2019

Good morning Chairwomen Vandermeer and Bernier and committee members,

Thank you for taking the time today to hold a hearing on the Summer Camp Regulatory Reform Package. This bill package was a collaborative effort to modernize and streamline the state's regulations and requirements on overnight recreational summer camps.

These overnight recreational and educational summer camps are hidden gems located throughout the Northwoods and rural Wisconsin, inviting hundreds of campers from dozens of countries to experience our beautiful natural resources and create fond memories of Wisconsin that last a lifetime. These camps not only teach children independence, social skills and love of the outdoors, they also bring in millions of dollars in rural tourism revenues and employ hundreds of local residents.

Currently, these camps are regulated as restaurants, educational centers, clinics and child care centers, adding layers of duplicative regulations they must meet. Wisconsin law should take into account the uniqueness of the camps as recreational entities and their specific uses.

The bill I have authored will deal specifically with the building code guidelines for the camps. AB 435 (SB 396) will require the Department of Safety and Professional Services to revise the commercial building code and establish new standards for the recreational camps, taking into account seasonal and specific usage. This will enable the experts in building code regulations to work with camps around our state to find something that is common sense and works for everyone.

I want to thank my co-author Senator Tiffany for his work on this bill, and my package co-authors Senators Petrowski and Bernier, and Representatives Oldenburg, Magnafici, James and Edming for their partnership in this. Lastly, I would like to thank both your committees for your consideration and time. I look forward to your questions.

## **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 black ink that reads "Tom Rosenberg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "T" and "R".

Tom Rosenberg  
President/CEO

American Camp Association

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**CHIPPEWA RANCH CAMP** | EST.  
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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.

**AB 428/SB 399**

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