



PATRICK TESTIN

STATE SENATOR

DATE: October 23, 2019

RE: **Testimony on 2019 Senate Bill 500**

TO: The Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Senator Patrick Testin

Thank you members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services for accepting my testimony on Senate Bill 500.

According to the American Association for Respiratory Care, there are roughly 3,000 licensed Respiratory Care Practitioners (RCPs) in Wisconsin. These practitioners perform quality respiratory healthcare to patients in hospitals, physician's offices, and outpatient clinics who are suffering from pediatric and adult asthma, COPD, and lung cancer.

Wisconsin statutes outline accreditation and education standards for these practitioners and have not been updated in several years. In order to ensure that these healthcare providers continue to perform quality care, minor updates are needed.

Senate Bill 500 will make the following changes to properly reflect current standards in the respiratory healthcare setting:

- Eliminate the temporary Respiratory Care Practitioner certificate created in 1991 when temporary licenses were needed to allow RCPs to continue practicing while awaiting test results that were tabulated manually.
- Update the Respiratory Care Practitioner examination name to "Therapist Multiple-Choice Examination by the National Board for Respiratory Care," the current test used to become a RCP.
- Update accreditation qualifications for Wisconsin-based institutions that provide respiratory care curriculum.

Thank you again for listening to my testimony and I hope that you will join me in supporting this bill.



JESSIE RODRIGUEZ

STATE REPRESENTATIVE ★ 21ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

**SB 500: Updating Respiratory Care Practitioner Licensing
Testimony of State Representative Jessie Rodriguez
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
October 23, 2019**

Good morning,

Chairman and committee members, thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 500, legislation that will update our laws as it relates to the practice of respiratory care in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin has nearly 3,000 licensed respiratory care practitioners (RCPs) providing care to thousands of residents for a variety of respiratory diseases including asthma, COPD, lung cancer and pediatric asthma. All four diseases have risen in recent years.

Licensing for RCPs is outlined in state law but our statutes surrounding this profession have not been updated in several years and in some instances have not been looked at since 1991.

Thousands of patients rely on the vital care that RCPs provide and it is important that our state statutes are current to guarantee RCPs can continue providing this critical care while maintaining the high standards their patients have come to expect.

This bill simply aims to align state statutes with changes in the respiratory healthcare setting.

This legislation will accomplish three things:

- Eliminate the temporary RCP certificate created in 1991 when temporary licenses were needed to allow RCPs to continue practicing while awaiting



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STATE REPRESENTATIVE ★ 21ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

the results of the certification exam. The results are immediately tabulated now.

- Update the RCP examination name to the “Therapist Multiple-Choice Examination by the National Board for Respiratory Care,” the current test used to become an RCP.
- Lastly, update accreditation qualifications for Wisconsin-based institutions that provide respiratory care curriculum.

This legislation is simple but important. It will ensure that RCPs can continue to provide the respiratory care that is vital to many Wisconsin residents. It is time to ensure our statutes properly reflect changes in the respiratory healthcare setting. I encourage your support for this legislation.

Thank you.



Date: Wednesday, October 23, 2019

To: Senate Committee on Health & Human Services

From: Ron Pasewald, President, Wisconsin Society for Respiratory Care

Re: Testimony in Support of SB 500

According to American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC), there are almost 3,000 licensed Respiratory Care Practitioners in Wisconsin. These Wisconsin licensed Respiratory Care Practitioners (RCP) ensure respiratory therapy services provide patients in any care setting are performed by RCPs who meet the highest standards of accredited education and competency the state requires to render such care.

According to the CDC and American Lung Association, Wisconsin is experiencing an increase in the following lung disease categories:

- 132,013 children with pediatric asthma
- 460,277 adults with asthma
- 158,000 diagnosed with COPD
- 4,230 with lung cancer

In an effort to ensure these professional healthcare providers continue to perform necessary and quality care; minor updates to select outdated statutes are necessary. Therefore, this legislation would make the following modifications to Chapter 448 of the state statutes.

- Eliminates the “temporary” RCP certificate created in 1991 when temporary licenses were necessary for recent graduates awaiting manual exam score results
- Updates the RCP examination name from “National Board for Respiratory Care’s Certified Respiratory Technician Exam” to “Therapist Multiple-Choice Examination by the National Board for Respiratory Care”
- Updates accreditation qualifications for Wisconsin-based institutions with respiratory care curriculum

We encourage the Senate Health and Human Services Committee to vote SB 500 out of its committee. If these updates are passed into law, it will ensure quality and continuity of care, as well as an additional tool in streamlining a qualified respiratory care practitioner workforce in Wisconsin. Thank you.