



# SCOTT KRUG

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 72<sup>nd</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

(608) 266-0215  
FAX: (608) 282-3672  
District: (715) 459-2267  
Toll-Free: (888) 529-0072

P.O. Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53708-8952  
Rep.Krug@legis.wi.gov

## AB343 FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL TESTIMONY

Chairman Macco and committee members thank you for taking the time to hear AB343 today.

On April 16, 1996 then Governor Tommy G. Thompson signed into law, legislation designating Wisconsin Rapids as the site of the Wisconsin State Firefighters Memorial. "Wisconsin Firefighters put their lives on the line every time they battle a blaze and it is only fitting that we honor those who were lost in the line of duty," Gov. Thompson said "The State Firefighters Memorial is a tremendous project that will make sure we never forget the courage, bravery and dedication of our firefighters. And Wisconsin Rapids is an ideal location for the memorial because of its central location in the state." Mayor Zach Vruwink of Wisconsin Rapids is here to testify on the importance of the memorial to Wisconsin Rapids.

On average the memorial has collected enough funds through the checkoff designation process to cover some of its maintenance costs. The amount collected through tax checkoff donation is around \$28,000 per year. The funds are not state dollars but reduce income tax refunds or increase the amount of tax owed by an individual taxpayer. This bill allows that to continue for the next five years at which time we can revisit the issue. The Memorial is also an important piece of the revitalization of the Wisconsin Rapids river front area. The park and walking path draw local interest and increase the awareness of the sacrifice and dedication of our state firefighters, professional volunteer alike. Several members with the Firefighter Memorial Association are also here to testify today as to the importance of the memorial to the public and especially to firefighters all over the State of WI.

There are currently eight similar check-off designations on the state tax forms. The current law requirement is that no more than 10 check-offs be in existence. This bill is five pages but can very easily be boiled down to two simple concepts. We are not asking for state tax dollars only to give individuals the option to send some of their own tax dollars AND this check-off will be a permanent option (unless repealed by future legislatures) to recognize the importance of the Memorial as dedicated by Gov. Thompson as a permanent reminder of the bravery, and sacrifice made by so many for the greater good.

This bill has bipartisan support in both chambers. It is also supported by the Professional Fire Fighters Association of WI, the State Fire Chiefs Association, and the State Firefighter Association.

Again, I appreciate the opportunity to bring this bill before you and am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Krug". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a horizontal line.

Scott Krug  
State Representative 72<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District



## PATRICK TESTIN

STATE SENATOR

DATE: October 5, 2017  
RE: **Testimony on 2017 Assembly Bill 343**  
TO: The Assembly Committee on Ways and Means  
FROM: Senator Patrick Testin

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Thank you to Chairman Macco and the members of the committee for accepting my written testimony on Assembly Bill 343, which creates an individual income tax checkoff for donations to the Firefighters Memorial Association.

I would like to invite all of you visit Wisconsin Rapids, and while visiting Rapids, to make time to see the Wisconsin State Firefighters Memorial Park, located on the southwest side of the city. The memorial is dedicated to preserving the memory of firefighters who have died in the line of duty, and to honor all firefighters for their service.

The Wisconsin State Firefighters Memorial (WSFM) is a non-profit organization that receives no state, federal, local funding or membership fees. They rely on donations and monetary gifts. That is where this bill comes in. Assembly Bill 343 (AB 343) would create an individual income tax checkoff for the Firefighters Memorial Association, which would support the maintenance of the memorial. This would be a permanent checkoff that would help to keep the memorial the destination that it is.

I encourage you to join me today in showing our support and thanks for the brave men and women who have served our state and our communities through their performance as firefighters. I believe many Wisconsinites would want to show their thanks to our firefighters and their sacrifices, and AB 343 would allow them to do that.

Thank you for your consideration.















