



SHANNON ZIMMERMAN

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 30th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Testimony on Assembly Bill 197

Assembly Committee on Transportation

August 13, 2019

Chairman Kulp and Committee Members,

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify on Assembly Bill 197. This bill originated from a constituent of mine who has run into road blocks while trying to start his own small business. Being an entrepreneur myself, I understand how difficult starting a business can be, and I would like to thank him for opportunity to address this issue.

Under current Department of Transportation (DOT) rules, anyone trying to start a driver school must choose an office location, which may be different from where the classroom is located. One economical way to deal with this is to have a home office. However, current DOT rules require that in order to use a home residence as an office, the office space must be separated from the residence by a wall, and have door access to the outside.

In the case of my constituent, he is a teacher who wants to use his actual classroom for teaching, and meet the office requirement by using his home. However, despite the fact that no student will ever enter his house, the DOT would still require him to renovate his home, imposing a large cost.

To rectify this, Senator Kooyenga and I drafted Assembly Bill 197 to say that DOT requirements for home driver school offices, such as the door and wall rules, do not apply only in cases where members of the public do not have access. This commonsense, narrowly tailored bill will remove barriers for my constituent, and anyone else who wants to teach the next generation of drivers.

Thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.



DALE KOOYENGA
STATE SENATOR · 5TH DISTRICT

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August 13, 2019

TO: Assembly Committee on Transportation

FR: Senator Dale Kooyenga

RE: support for Assembly Bill 197

Thank you Chairman Kulp and committee members for holding a hearing on this bill.

Wisconsin should always support our small businesses and take steps to allow them to grow and thrive. In keeping with that spirit, when Representative Zimmerman's constituent approached him asking for help to eliminate a barrier to establishing his small business, Assembly Bill 197 was crafted.

Assembly Bill 197 removes barriers that require driver school educators to follow specific home office requirements, even when the private residence office is not accessible by students and members of the public. Under current law, the Department of Transportation (DOT) prohibits a driver school office to be located at a residence unless the office is separated from the residence by a wall or partition and is accessible from outside the residence with a direct entrance. However, if the students and members of the public have no access to this area because it only functions as place to do office work, then the small business owner has engaged in an expensive renovation that does not benefit the public safety.

It is important to note that the current prohibition is created by rule. Rules of this nature act as legislation and should not have been created in the first place. We need to continue to support legislation that peels back non-democratically created rules that inhibit an individual's ability to start a business.

This bill prohibits DOT from applying costly requirements when students or members of the public would not have access to the driver school office (i.e. their home). This narrow change would allow for driver school educators to save money when doing so would not result in a public gain.

The goal of Assembly Bill 197 is to remove barriers that prevent small businesses from thriving in Wisconsin and to ultimately allow for a greater number of small businesses to enter the market and succeed in our state.

Thank you for your attention. I respectfully ask for your support of AB 197.