



Warren Petryk

State Representative • 93rd Assembly District

Date: March 26, 2019

To: Members of the Assembly Committee on Transportation
From: Representative Petryk

Re: Testimony regarding Assembly Bill 80 – Indication of veteran status on an operator's license or identification card.

Good afternoon Chairman Kulp and members of the committee. I appreciate this opportunity to come before you today to speak in favor of Assembly Bill 80 which I authored with Senator Andre Jacque. I also want to thank Chairman Kulp, Representative Murphy, Representative Skowronski and Representative Crowley for their support of this important piece of legislation.

Assembly Bill 80 expands the eligibility for the veterans identifier on state-issued driver's licenses or ID's to include any current or former member of the U.S. armed forces, a reserve unit of the U.S. armed forces, or the National Guard that was not dishonorably discharged.

Since 2014, veterans in our state have the option to identify themselves and their service to our country by a red "VETERAN" identifier printed on their Wisconsin driver license or state identification (ID) card from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

Under current law this veteran's designation is only available to veterans of the U.S. armed forces, which is defined in state statute to include individuals who have served a specific period of active duty in the U.S. armed forces.

In an effort to include all veterans, Assembly Bill 80 will expand the veteran's designation for state-issued driver's licenses or ID's by defining "veteran" as any current or former member of the U.S. armed forces, a reserve unit of the U.S. armed forces, or the national guard for the purpose of enabling such a person to indicate on his or her operator's license or ID card that he or she is a veteran.

Assembly Bill 80 is a small, no cost change, which will allow all of our states veterans to have the recognition they so deserve with the option to have the veteran identifier printed on their state driver's license or ID.

I humbly ask for your support on this very important piece of legislation. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.



ANDRÉ JACQUE

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*Testimony before the Assembly Committee on Transportation
State Senator André Jacque
March 26th, 2019*

Chairman Kulp and Members of the Assembly Committee on Transportation,

Thank you for holding this hearing and the opportunity to testify before you today in support of Assembly Bill 80. Rep. Petryk and I have introduced this legislation to expand eligibility for the Wisconsin Veterans Status on operator's license or identification card.

All 50 states now offer a military veteran designation that can be printed on state-issued driver's licenses or IDs. Wisconsin's veterans' designation was first implemented five years ago and has quickly become popular as an easy way for veterans to demonstrate proof of their military service without having to carry around their DD-214 form or other documents with sensitive personal information. There is no cost to veterans for including the veteran designation, although there has been confusion for some veterans who have gone to the DMV for a new license and had their request for a veterans identifier declined due to not meeting the requisite active duty requirements in current law.

Several veterans have contacted my office to express their frustrations with the lack of clarity on what currently qualifies under the law and why their service prevented them from displaying their veteran status on their ID. We have introduced AB 80 to expand eligibility for the veterans' identifier to include any current or former member of the U.S. armed forces, a reserve unit of the U.S. armed forces, or the National Guard that was not dishonorably discharged.

Thank you for your consideration of this legislation.

Ladies and Gentleman,

I served in the Wisconsin National Guard in the 2-127th infantry for 6 years and I attempted to get the veteran designation on my driver's license. I was surprised to learn that according to the state of Wisconsin I did not qualify for veteran status. I learned that only if my unit was activated would I be eligible for veteran designation. When our young men and woman enlist in the Wisconsin National Guard they go to basic training and advanced training for their military occupational specialty (MOS), they agree to serve our state in the event of an emergency and our nation when called upon.

The unit I was in has been deployed overseas several times since my enlistment ended. I knew that at any time during my service I could have also been called to duty because I was properly trained and a fully qualified member of the U.S. Cavalry Scout platoon for the Headquarters Company of 2-127th infantry.

Just because all members of the Wisconsin National Guard are not activated doesn't mean that they are not trained and ready to serve. Quite to the contrary, they stepped up and are prepared when others were unwilling or unable. Please consider allowing members of the Wisconsin National Guard and Reserve to receive veteran status in accordance with 2019 Assembly Bill 80.

Thank you,

Scott Gauthier