



1995 SENATE BILL 604

March 7, 1996 - Introduced by Senator RISSER, cosponsored by Representatives BOYLE, LORGE and SERATTI. Referred to Committee on State Government Operations and Corrections.

1 **AN ACT** *to repeal* 765.002 (2) and 765.17; *to amend* 765.16 (intro.), 765.16 (1)
2 and 765.16 (3); and *to repeal and recreate* 765.16 (2) of the statutes; **relating**
3 **to:** persons who may officiate at a marriage.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Under current law, 2 parties may be legally married if they obtain a marriage license and mutually declare that they take each other as husband and wife before a duly authorized officiating person in the presence of at least 2 competent witnesses. A number of persons are specified as duly authorized officiating persons, including such persons as ordained members of the clergy of any religious denomination or society; judges; and the 2 parties themselves in accordance with the customs, rules and regulations of any religious society, denomination or sect to which either of the parties belongs. This bill adds as persons authorized to officiate at marriages any person recognized to officiate at marriages by the culture of either party, as well as the 2 parties themselves in accordance with the customs of the culture of either party. The bill also removes some rather archaic language that specifies additional categories of members of the clergy and a provision that requires a nonresident member of the clergy, in order to officiate at a marriage, to have a letter of sponsorship from a member of the clergy who is of the same religious denomination or society and who has a church in this state.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

4 **SECTION 1.** 765.002 (2) of the statutes is repealed.
5 **SECTION 2.** 765.16 (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

