

WI Fire & EMS Legislative Leadership Coalition

September 13, 1999

Senator Rodney Moen
Chairperson Senate Health, Utilities, &
Veteran Affairs Committee
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882

PROFESSIONAL
FIRE FIGHTERS OF
WI, INC.

Dear Senator Moen:

WI CHAPTER
INTERNATIONAL
ARSON
INVESTIGATORS
ASSOCIATION

Our organization is sending this letter regarding Senate Bill 225 related to the effective date of the requirement that entities that provide care for children and adults conduct background investigations of their current employees. This bill as proposed changes the effective date of implementation for the background checks from October 1, 1999 to February 1, 2000.

WI FIRE CHIEFS
EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION

The Wisconsin Fire & EMS Legislative Leadership Coalition supports Assembly Bill 449. It is our understanding that the budget bill contains language that will exempt Firefighters, Emergency Medical Technicians, and Paramedics from the caregiver rules when they are implemented. Obviously until the budget is passed all personnel associated with our Coalition are still required to have the background checks completed by October 1, 1999. With the passage of SB 225 the implementation date will be delayed until after the budget has been approved.

WI FIRE
INSPECTORS
ASSOCIATION

WI SOCIETY OF
FIRE SERVICE
INSTRUCTORS

We request that the members of the Senate Health, Utilities, & Veteran Affairs Committee support SB 225 and vote it out of Committee so it may be acted on immediately.

WI STATE FIRE
CHIEFS
ASSOCIATION

Respectfully,

Mark D. Zeier, Chairman

WI STATE
FIRE FIGHTERS
ASSOCIATION

WI Fire & EMS Legislative Leadership Coalition

Cc: Coalition Associations

The logo for the Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups (CWAG) features the letters "CWAG" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, centered within a solid black square.

Elder Law Center

Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 225****Betsy Abramson, Director, CWAG Elder Law Center
Senate Committee on Health, Utilities, Veterans and Military Affairs
Wednesday, September 15, 1999**

The Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups strongly supports SB 225, providing a change to the effective date by which certain child and adult care facilities, including group homes and hospitals, must conduct background investigations of current employees who have access to the facilities' clients. We are unable to be present at the hearing but submit this testimony for your consideration.

The law governing criminal background checks was first enacted in Wisconsin as part of the last biennial budget. Due to on-going discussions between providers, regulators and advocates, some of the original law's provisions will be revised (i.e., relaxed) in the next biennial budget currently pending in the Wisconsin legislature. When the budget passes, the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) will need to revise its rules governing background checks to comport with the budget language. We would expect that this will take several months. SB 225 is therefore needed to ensure that there is enough time for both the law and rules to be amended before the effective date of the required background investigations. If the delay is not passed, there will be current employees who, under the old law would lose their jobs, but under the new rule could then be reinstated. This would cause create confusion amongst providers and be very disruptive for residents and patients. Accordingly, we ask that you support this bill to ensure that there will be a smooth transition in the final implementation of these critically-important background investigations.

The Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups strongly supports SB 225.