

Statement in Support of SB 305
(A bill to allow Guard call-up for public safety issues)

My name is Randi Wind Milsap and I serve as the state legal counsel to the Adjutant General. I am appearing on his behalf today because he is in Washington D.C. I am here to ask your assistance in rectifying a problem we in the Department of Military Affairs have had for a long time. That problem revolves around the National Guard's ability to quickly respond and assess potential emergencies as well as actual emergencies.

The National Guard in Wisconsin primarily supports the State in response to natural disasters like tornadoes and flooding. However, in order to determine how to respond and what to respond with, we send an assessment team out to the general area first, then respond based upon their report. As it currently stands, we must first wait for the event to happen, ask the Governor to declare an emergency, activate the Guard in a State duty status, and only then can we send out the assessment team, before finally responding with the necessary troops

and equipment. We are requesting this legislation to shorten up that cycle of events.

We are asking that the Governor be given slightly broader authority to activate the Guard when he knows a natural or man-made disaster is imminent. In other words, if the public safety or welfare is at risk, the Governor can activate the assessment team so they can be on the ground at the site as quickly as possible. We anticipate this will shorten our response time by as much as half a day and as we all know in an emergency that much time may really be critical. Therefore, the Department of Military Affairs urge you to recommend to the senate the adoption of this legislation.