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(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

**WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ...
PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS**

2009-10

(session year)

Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

**Committee on ... Transportation, Tourism,
Forestry, and Natural Resources (SC-TTFNR)**

COMMITTEE NOTICES ...

- Committee Reports ... **CR**
- Executive Sessions ... **ES**
- Public Hearings ... **PH**

INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

- Appointments ... **Appt** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Clearinghouse Rules ... **CRule** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
(**ab** = Assembly Bill) (**ar** = Assembly Resolution) (**ajr** = Assembly Joint Resolution)
(**sb** = Senate Bill) (**sr** = Senate Resolution) (**sfr** = Senate Joint Resolution)
- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**

Senate

Record of Committee Proceedings

Committee on Transportation, Tourism, Forestry, and Natural Resources

Senate Bill 518

Relating to: creating an ambulance operator safety program in the Department of Transportation, rules of the road applicable to the operation of ambulances, requiring the exercise of rule-making authority, and making an appropriation.

By Senators Coggs and Miller; cosponsored by Representatives Hixson, Jorgensen, A. Williams and Turner.

February 09, 2010 Referred to Committee on Transportation, Tourism, Forestry, and Natural Resources.

April 8, 2010 **PUBLIC HEARING HELD**

Present: (6) Senators Holperin, Sullivan, Hansen, Leibham, Kedzie and Grothman.

Absent: (1) Senator Plale.

Appearances For

- Kim Hixson — 43rd Assembly District
- Gregg Theune, Whitewater

Appearances Against

- Forbes McIntosh — WI EMS Association

Appearances for Information Only

- Mark Lorge — Milwaukee Fire Department

Registrations For

- None.

Registrations Against

- Don Hayden — Durand Municipal Ambulance Service

Registrations for Information Only

- None.

April 20, 2010 **EXECUTIVE SESSION HELD**

Present: (7) Senators Holperin, Sullivan, Plale, Hansen, Leibham, Kedzie and Grothman.

Absent: (0) None.

April 22, 2010

Failed to pass pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution 1.

Elizabeth Novak
Committee Clerk





Wisconsin Department of Transportation

www.dot.wisconsin.gov

Division of State Patrol
Bureau of Transportation Safety
4802 Sheboygan Ave.
P O Box 7936
Madison, WI 53707-7936

Telephone: 608-266-0402
FAX: 608-267-0441

Date: March 10, 2010

To: Rep. John Steinbrink, Chair, Assembly Committee on Transportation

From: Dennis Hughes, Chief, Safety Programs Section, Division of State Patrol

Subject: Opposition to Assembly Bill 724

AB-724 would require all ambulance drivers to successfully complete a DOT-approved driver safety course and to maintain certification by re-taking a written exam every 3 years and re-taking the entire safety course every 6 years.

The Department respectfully registers its opposition to AB-724, for two reasons:

- 1) DOT is the wrong state agency for this responsibility.

While DOT is responsible for the annual inspection of ambulances to determine compliance with TRANS 309, this administrative rule only articulates the minimum vehicle and medical equipment required for ambulances to operate in Wisconsin.

There is no DOT-required driver safety course for Wisconsin for ambulance drivers, nor is there any DOT-administered ambulance driver certification/re-certification program.

State agency oversight of Emergency Medical Service providers and certification of Emergency Medical Technicians are functions of the Department of Health Services (DHS), not DOT.

- 2) AB-724 offers a perceived solution to a perceived problem. With all due respect to the bill sponsors and other supporters, we believe both perceptions are incorrect.

The at-fault crash involvement of a driver of an ambulance operating on emergency is a very rare event in Wisconsin.

During the most recent 5-year period for which complete data are available (2004-2008), there were a total of only 60 ambulances operating on emergency that were involved in police-reported crashes in Wisconsin – an average of one per month.

Only 2 of these 60 were fatal crashes, and 21 were non-fatal injury crashes.

Fifteen were single-unit crashes. The other 45 involved an ambulance colliding with another vehicle. An unknown number of the multi-unit crashes were due to the actions of the ambulance driver.

DOT has no firm data on the number of ambulance drivers who have successfully completed an emergency vehicle operation course (EVOC). However, it is reasonable to assume most drivers

currently active with ambulance service providers have successfully completed an EVOC course, due employer or volunteer EMS service policies designed to limit liability and to maximize the safety of patients and on-board personnel while in transit.

Therefore, the net traffic safety benefit to be gained, in terms of improved ambulance driver performance, via AB-724's required EVOC course completion, re-testing every 3 years, and course repetition every 6 years, by all ambulance drivers, is likely to be minimal



Novak, Elizabeth

From: Colbert, Kathie
Sent: Wednesday, April 07, 2010 2:38 PM
To: Novak, Elizabeth
Subject: FW: 2009 Senate Bill 518

Please distribute to Transportation committee members for the hearing tomorrow, April 8th.

Thanks!

Kathie Colbert
Senator Kathleen Vinehout's Office
608-266-8546
877-763-6636 toll free
sen.vinehout@legis.wi.gov

From: heydon@mail.com [mailto:heydon@mail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 07, 2010 2:24 PM
To: Sen.Vinehout; bob.haselman@everestev.com
Subject: 2009 Senate Bill 518

Senator Vinehout

My name is Don Hayden and I'm the Service Director for the Durand Municipal Ambulance Service in Durand WI. I'm writing in regards to Senate Bill 518. The bill is up for a public hearing on April 8th. It deals with creating a required specialized driver training program. While sending ambulance drivers to specialized training is important, I believe it should be up to the department to have this in either their bylaws or policies and procedures.

Senate Bill 518, in my opinion, would create another roadblock in recruitment for rural volunteer services that are already struggling to keep the ambulances staffed. We already have monthly, and sometimes twice a month training sessions and have a license refresher every 2 years. I also have concerns with availability and cost. We have more than once been denied a course because of the lack of instructors. Being volunteers, it doesn't allow us to go during normal business hours because most if not all work full time. This means that the training would have to be done at our facility normally after 6 pm. And how is the course going to be funded? There is only so much money to go around and right now, as I'm sure you are aware, things are tight.

If more and more training is mandated, soon the training will be continuous and this would be devastating to many small departments such as ours.

In closing, I again would like to thank you for your time and feel free to call or email me if you would like to talk more about this issue.

Don Hayden-Director
Durand Municipal Ambulance Service
Durand WI 54736
715-279-2079
heydon@mail.com

4/8/2010





Forbes brought this
4/19/10

10:40
at

Memorandum

**To: Senator Jim Holperin, Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on
Transportation, Tourism, Forestry and Natural Resources**

From: Richard Meeker, President

Date: Monday, April 19, 2010

Re: Senate Bill 518 – Ambulance Driver Training Mandate

The Wisconsin EMS Association (WEMSA) has reviewed the Substitute Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 724 and Senate Bill 518. The fundamental change in the bill essentially transfers the proposed mandated training program to a different state agency. WEMSA maintains its opposition to the bill.

Regardless what state agency is involved with this bill, if such training is mandated, it is critical to establish a stable source of funding associated with this bill for this training. The Association wants to make it perfectly clear; we oppose any state mandated training program unless it is funded. We believe the way the language is currently written will cause financial hardship on the ambulance services and local communities.

The Board of Directors of the Wisconsin EMS Association suggests creating minimal driver training guidelines for local ambulance services to follow. To that end, the Wisconsin EMS Association board is looking into a possible solution. Training guidelines could be established for ambulance service operations that would ultimately be approved by local community officials without requiring ambulance service personnel to take expensive driving courses mandated the State Legislature. The approved ambulance guidelines would be incorporated into the ambulance services operational plan and then submitted to the State of Wisconsin EMS Office.

We believe this is an alternative solution that EMS services could support. This approach would achieve the goal of getting EMS personnel involved in this type of training while limiting the financial impact or added formal training coursework to our members.

Thank you.

26422 Oakridge Drive
Wind Lake, Wisconsin 53185
(800) 793-6820 (Office)



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FORBES McINTOSH

Lobbying Consultant

State | County | Municipal

14 W. Mifflin Street

Suite 206

P.O. Box 5057

Madison, WI 53705

608-255-0029 office

608-332-5205 mobile

forbes@wis-gps.com





Kim Hixson

Date ?

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE • 43RD ASSEMBLY DISTRICT
CHAIR, COMMITTEE ON COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
Serving parts of Rock, Walworth, Jefferson and Dane Counties

REP. HIXSON'S TESTIMONY ON SB-518, THE R.O.A.D. SAFETY TRAINING ACT

Good morning, Chairman Holperin and members of the Senate Committee on Transportation, Tourism, Forestry and Natural Resources. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 518, the Requirement of Ambulance Driver (R.O.A.D.) Safety Training Act.

A few years ago, a colleague of mine at UW-Whitewater, Gregg Theune lost his wife, Cindy in a tragic accident involving an ambulance. Gregg joins us this morning and I would like to thank him for being here to tell his story. Tragically, Cindy's vehicle was struck by the ambulance at an intersection as she proceeded through a green traffic signal. The ambulance driver was told by her partner about the approaching red traffic signal, which the driver acknowledged seeing but decided not to slow down for when entering the intersection.

Gregg had approached me with concerns regarding current state regulation of ambulance driver training. When I looked into it, I was surprised to learn that Wisconsin has **no** regulations for ambulance driver training. We have regulations for police officers and fire-fighters. Wisconsinites often rely on ambulances to provide a very necessary service. Serving as an ambulance operator can carry with it significant risks when transporting a patient, frequently at high speeds. With such danger involved, it is startling that ambulance drivers are not required to participate in specialized driver training programs. I think it just makes sense that ambulance operators have adequate training to assure not only their safety, but the safety of others on the road.

I know the hard-working, full-time and volunteer EMS professionals take their jobs very seriously. Our lives depend on them. This legislation is not aimed at an industry – it's a call to work together in developing a set of common training standards. It is my hope that this common-sense bill will offer people like Mr. Theune the small solace that the state has required that all ambulance drivers receive a *common statewide curriculum* that includes classroom instruction and training time on a vehicle operating course.

In response to suggestions made during the Assembly Transportation Committee's public hearing on Assembly Bill 724, the Assembly companion of this legislation, I introduced a substitute amendment which will address the valuable suggestions offered. Senator Coggs, the author of SB-518 has introduced a substitute amendment on this legislation this morning that makes a couple of key changes:

- **Changes the agency responsible for administering this law from DOT to DHS;**
- **Creates an advisory council to establish rules that will guide the development of training procedures;**
- **Delays the effective date on this bill to ensure that associations have time to implement the new training requirements and limit initial costs.**

It is my understanding from Assembly Transportation Committee Chairman Steinbrink that the companion version of this legislation will receive an executive session next week. I have attached a copy of the substitute amendment with my testimony. If committee members have any suggestions I would be happy to work with anyone if they feel any additional changes are necessary.

At a basic level, this bill would also allow driver schools and Technical Colleges to be certified by DHS to offer the driving safety course to drivers, thus making the training more readily available. This bill will protect the health and safety of our friends and neighbors, as well as the safety of ambulance drivers themselves. Gregg's heartfelt story is a constant reminder to me that we must continue to work together toward stronger safety regulations in Wisconsin. This legislation is a constructive step toward reducing unnecessary and unfortunate accidents caused by insufficiently trained ambulance operators. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the State Legislature to make our roads safer for all Wisconsinites.

Finally, I would like to say that this legislation is not geared toward trained ambulance drivers, but to require that individuals and organizations have a common training program. I have had the opportunity to sit down with both the *Professional Ambulance Association of Wisconsin* and the *Wisconsin EMS Association* and have made every effort to incorporate changes suggested by these two organizations.

While we certainly came to the table with different approaches to this legislation, I'm confident that we can work together to mitigate costs to individual agencies while working collaboratively toward our common interest of public safety. I invite any questions or concerns that you may have.