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AB 77: Former Officers Employed by another State, and Successor Agencies

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety

Thank you Chairman Wanggaard and members of the Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety for holding a hearing today on Assembly Bill 77, authored by myself and Senator Janet Bewley. Assembly Bill 77 streamlines the concealed carry licensing process for former law enforcement officers in Wisconsin.

Former law enforcement officers are generally eligible to obtain either a Wisconsin Concealed Carry license or a Federal HR218 Concealed Carry License. Most former law enforcement officers prefer to obtain an HR218 License for various reasons. The HR218 License is valid in all 50 states, requires annual training and is only valid for handguns.

To obtain an HR218 License, former Wisconsin law enforcement officers must contact their former employer, get certification from that employer indicating the officer satisfies all of the statutory requirements to carry a handgun concealed, and complete annual training.

Under current law, there is no clear way for a former out of state officer who is now a Wisconsin resident, to obtain an HR218 License. As a result, former officers must contact and work with their former out of state employer in order to satisfy the requirements for an HR218 License. This is problematic and burdensome. For instance, since an HR218 License requires annual certification, a former out of state law enforcement officer must travel back to the state in which they were employed each year in order to satisfy the required training.

Assembly Bill 77 will streamline this process and allow former out of state law enforcement officers who are now Wisconsin residents to obtain and satisfy all necessary requirements for an HR218 License through Wisconsin's Department of Justice.

This bill also addresses an issue raised by one of my constituents who was a former officer for an agency that had dissolved following his retirement. Under current law, it is unclear how a former officer can become certified to carry a concealed weapon if the agency they worked for no longer exists.

Assembly Bill 77 fixes this issue by stating that any agency who assumes the responsibilities of another, must also assume the responsibilities associated with providing adequate documentation to former officers looking to obtain HR218 certification.



SENATOR JANET BEWLEY

WISCONSIN STATE SENATE

**Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety
Public Hearing - Assembly Bill 77
September 1, 2015**

Good Morning Chairman Wanggaard and Committee Members. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you this afternoon and want to thank Representative Kleefisch for working with me on this bill, both last session and this session.

In the fall of my first term in the Assembly, I was contacted by a constituent, Paul Stein, who retired from the Duluth Police Department, but now lives in Maple Wisconsin. Paul was concerned that Wisconsin's recently passed Conceal Carry law did not authorize the Department of Justice to issue certification cards to retired law enforcement officers who reside in Wisconsin but worked for an out-of-state law enforcement agency.

When I looked into it, I found out this was true. In what appears to be an unintentional oversight, the legislation we passed in 2011 authorized DOJ to issue certification cards to former Wisconsin state and local law enforcement agency employees and former federal law enforcement agency employees but not to those who retired from an out-of-state law enforcement agency.

After talking with Paul, I agreed to introduce legislation to allow all qualified former law enforcement officers who call Wisconsin home the same opportunity to obtain certification cards in Wisconsin. Law enforcement officers who retire from out of state agencies and live in Wisconsin who satisfy the same standards and requirements as those who retired from Wisconsin and Federal agencies will be treated the same.

Last session. Representative Kleefisch added an amendment to the bill to help law enforcement officers who retired from an agency that no longer exists. Under our Concealed Carry laws, if the law enforcement agency they worked for no longer exists, the former officer cannot fulfill the requirements and obtain a certification card. Representative Kleefisch's amendment to allow successor law enforcement agencies to assume responsibility of issuing certification cards to former officers was adopted and the bill passed the Assembly, but did not make it through the Senate.

Representative Kleefisch introduced the amended bill this session. I am pleased that a diverse and bipartisan group of legislators chose to cosponsor the bill and hope you will be able to support it as well.

Thank you for your time and attention. I will do my best to answer any questions you may have.



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