



PAUL TITTL

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 25TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Assembly Committee on Local Government
Assembly Bill 145 Testimony
May 3, 2017

First of all, I would like to thank you, Chairman Brooks and committee members, for allowing me to testify before you today on Assembly Bill 145.

I often say that most of the good ideas for bills don't come from legislators sitting in Madison. They come from people throughout the state. AB 145 is no exception.

It came from the mayor of my city, Justin Nickels. Mayor Nickels had been looking forward to testifying with me today but was unable to do so because of a change in his schedule. He has sent written testimony in support of the bill.

At the outset, I would like to say that this bill is essentially a red tape review bill, because it is a technical change to the law, modernizing the meeting notice provision to reflect changes in the way we communicate today.

Under current law, a mayor may call a special meeting of the common council. The meeting notice must be personally delivered to each member or left at the member's place of residence at least six hours before the meeting.

That law made sense in a world without personal computers, cell phones and other electronic devices. However, the way we communicate has changed, and we should change the law as well.

An important feature of AB 145 is that it allows members to select the way they would personally like to be notified. Some may still wish to be notified by personal delivery at home. Others may choose an electronic method. AB 145 provides that flexibility.

Therefore, a common council member could receive notification by phone call, by email, or by text at any location. Because of the almost instant nature of electronic communication, the member is likely to become aware of the special meeting far more quickly than under the notification system required by current law.

Thanks for hearing this bill today. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

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DEVIN LEMAHIEU

STATE SENATOR

**Testimony on AB 145
RE: Special Council Meetings
May 3, 2017**

Thank you Chairman Brooks and Members of the Assembly Committee on Local Government for hearing testimony today on Assembly Bill 145.

Under current law, when a mayor of a city calls a special meeting of the common council, the meeting notice must be personally delivered to each member or left at the member's place of residence at least six hours in advance of the meeting.

AB 145 is a technical fix which brings state law in line with modern methods of communication. The bill allows city council members the ability to indicate how they would like to be notified. Members will be able to receive notification by phone call, email, or by text message at any location.

AB 145 does not change the six hour minimum notice requirement, rather it allows each member to receive the notice via a method of communication that is most efficient, such as a phone call, email or text message.

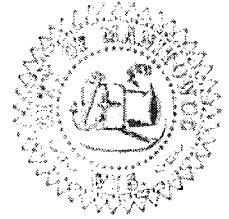
This bill is supported by the League of Municipalities, City of Manitowoc, and the City of Madison.

Thank you for your consideration on Assembly 145.



CITY OF MANITOWOC

WISCONSIN, USA
www.manitowoc.org



May 3, 2017

TO: Assembly Committee on Local Government

FROM: Justin M. Nickels
Mayor, City of Manitowoc

RE: Assembly Bill 145 – Testimony
Notification of special meetings of the Common Council

Thank you, Chairman Brooks and Committee Members, for allowing me to provide written testify on Assembly Bill 145. I appreciate Assemblyman Tittl for introducing this legislation which was requested on behalf of the City of Manitowoc.

Under current state law I am required to send a uniformed officer to each Common Council members' personal residence to serve them with a Common Council agenda for a special meeting that has been called. The City of Manitowoc has 10 Common Council members.

We feel this is an outdated method to reach Common Council members. With today's technology, it would be much more efficient to make a personal phone call, text, or e-mail while ensuring our tax dollars allocated toward police patrol is better utilized. We respectfully request a change in this law for communities around the State of Wisconsin.

Please feel free to contact me anytime if you wish to discuss this further.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mayor Justin M. Nickels – Phone (920) 686-6980
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May 3, 2017

To: Members of the Assembly Committee on Local Government
From: Nick Zavos, Government Relations Director
Re: Support for Assembly Bill 145

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of 2017 Assembly Bill 145.

AB 145 is a sensible update to state statutes.

Special meetings do not happen often. The City of Madison has had only a few in the past ten years; generally, they have been needed to comply with a legal deadline for a contract or grant.

State law requires notice of a special meeting be delivered personally to the alder, or delivered to the alder's home. The City of Madison has twenty alders. If a special meeting is called with only a few days notice, the city will use police officers or paralegals from the attorney's office to deliver notice to each alder's home. If there is a week or more lead time, the council's administrative assistant will keep a checklist in the council office. Each alder that comes by the office is given personal notice. As the meeting date approaches, a police officer or paralegal will be sent to the home of any alder who has not come by the office and received personal notice.

Even as recently as thirty five years ago, the requirement of personal delivery to an alder's residence may have been a reasonable minimum requirement. However, in our current era of electronic communication, the current statutory requirements have become outdated.

I urge you to support adoption of AB 145.



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To: Assembly Committee on Local Government
From: Curt Witynski, J.D., Assistant Director, League of Wisconsin Municipalities
Date: May 3, 2017
Re: **AB 145, Modernizing Process for Informing Council Members of a Special Meeting of the Common Council**

The League of Wisconsin Municipalities supports AB 145, modernizing the methods by which a mayor may inform council members that a special meeting has been called. The bill deletes a current law provision requiring that notice of a special meeting be delivered in writing either personally or to the council member's usual abode and replaces it with language allowing a mayor to inform council members in a manner likely to give each member notice of the meeting. This could include notice by phone call, texting, email or in writing. The bill retains the current requirement that the mayor must provide council members notice at least six hours before the special meeting.

We view this bill as updating state law to reflect changes in technology allowing council members to be efficiently informed of a special council meeting electronically. This particular state law has not been changed since it was enacted early in the 20th century.

The bill doesn't specify how notice of a special meeting is to be accomplished. Cities may choose to retain the requirement that notices of special meetings be provided to council members in writing and delivered personally to the council members.

The bill creates flexibility where none exists currently.

We urge the committee to recommend passage of AB 145. Thank you for considering our comments and recommendation.