



# TOM TIFFANY

STATE SENATOR • 12TH SENATE DISTRICT

## **Testimony on Assembly Bill 484 Assembly Committee on Environment and Forestry October 3, 2017**

Thank you chairman Mursau and committee member for hearing testimony on AB 484 today. This bill makes a modest change to the requirements to serve as a commissioner of a sanitary district.

When a sanitary district is located within a single town, the town board may establish itself as the board of commissioners, appoint commissioners, or provide for their election. When a district includes territory in two or more towns, the town with the largest equalized full value of taxable property in the district determines whether to provide for appointed or elected commissioners. A sanitary district is governed by three commissioners who serve for staggered six-year terms – unless the town board serves as the commission.

Under current law, if the district is composed primarily of summer resort property, one or two nonresidents who own property in the district may serve as commissioners. This bill would simply allow for all three commissioners to be nonresidents, granted they still owned property in the district.

Although it may not be ideal to have all three commissioners be nonresidents, in rural areas it is often difficult to find dedicated individuals willing to serve on these sorts of boards. This bill widens the net of potential commissioners and makes it easier for sanitary districts to fill their board of commissioners.

I want to thank the committee for accepting my testimony and would ask for your support of AB 484.

Thank you.

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**Testimony for Assembly Bill 484  
Assembly Committee on Environment and Forestry  
October 3, 2017**

I would like to thank Chairman Jeff Mursau and the entire Assembly Committee on Environment and Forestry for allowing me to testify today on Assembly Bill 484.

Assembly Bill 484 makes a simple change to the residency requirements for town sanitary district commissioners. Under current law, if commissioners are elected or appointed and if the sanitary district is composed of primarily summer resort property, at least one of the commissioners **must** be a full time resident of the district. Additionally, any commissioner that doesn't reside in the district must own property within the sanitary district.

My office was notified earlier this year that in some of our rural and tourist driven Wisconsin communities, it can be quite difficult to find a qualified commissioner that resides within the sanitary district. In my district alone, the Town of Three Lakes Northernnaire Sanitary District is experiencing this problem where a multi-family development has no year round residents living within the development.

As a result of not being able to find full time residents to serve on town sanitary districts as directed under current law, there can be an even-number of sitting commissioners on the district. This can lead to tie-voting issues when votes take place to provide ongoing maintenance or repair for projects under the sanitary districts purview.

This bill eliminates the requirement that one of the commissioners is required to be a resident of the district. Under this bill, any commissioner who is not a resident of the district must still own property within the district to be a commissioner. This will streamline the process for towns to elect and appoint members to their town sanitary districts in rural and tourist driven areas.

I am hoping for strong bipartisan support on this legislation and would be happy to answer any questions.