



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

**Testimony before Assembly Committee on Health
Assembly Bill 59
Rep. Amy Loudenbeck, Sen. Terry Moulton, and Rep. Katrina Shankland
February 22, 2017**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and committee members for the opportunity to testify in favor of this bi-partisan legislation, Assembly Bill 59. AB 59 updates statutory references for emergency medical technicians and first responders and aligns Wisconsin terminology with federal language and current practices.

Current law uses the term “emergency medical technician” to collectively refer to numerous levels of certification. The bill changes the collective term “emergency medical technician” to “emergency medical services practitioner” and renames the levels of certification to be consistent with federal law and current practices.

We became aware of Wisconsin using a different set of terms when working on another piece of legislation on a related matter. We found it difficult to follow the draft language when the term “emergency medical technician” was used to refer to an individual as well as a group. Modernizing these definitions will make our state statutes and future legislation easier to understand and will make the distinction between the various levels of EMT certifications much more clear.

It is important to note that the Department of Health Services assisted our offices with drafting this bill, and the proposed changes are supported by DHS and many of the stakeholder groups.

This bill is simply remedial legislation, updating Wisconsin statutes to align with federal language. We would be happy to answer any questions at this time.



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

Scott Walker, Governor
Linda Seemeyer, Secretary

February 22, 2017

Summary of terminology changes in AB 59

Current WI Statute and Admin. Rule	AB 59 (Conforming to NREMT)
First Responder	Emergency Medical Responder
EMT Basic	Emergency Medical Technician
EMT Intermediate	EMT Intermediate
EMT Intermediate Technician	Advanced Emergency Medical Technician
EMT Paramedic	Paramedic
Umbrella Term	
Emergency Medical Technician	Emergency Medical Services Practitioner

Wisconsin EMS Association

Your voice for EMS



To: Representative Joe Sanfelippo, Chair
Members of the Assembly Committee on Health

From: Marc Cohen, Executive Director

Date: Wednesday, February 22, 2016

Re: **Testimony in Support of Assembly Bill 59**
EMS Terminology Change and Corrections

Good morning and thank you Chairman Sanfelippo and members of the Assembly Committee on Health for the opportunity to testify before you today. I am Marc Cohen, and as the Executive Director of the Wisconsin EMS Association (WEMSA), and on behalf of our Board of Directors, and the members we represent throughout the State of Wisconsin, we are we are here today to urge your support toward passage of Assembly Bill 59.

The Wisconsin EMS Association, as the “Voice of EMS in Wisconsin,” and which represents over 7,000 members and 450 services who provide tens of thousands of life saving calls throughout our state. According to Department of Health Services – Wisconsin EMS System Statistics, annual calls for all services statewide totaled more than 640,000 in 2015.

National uniformity in EMS and medical terminology is important because it allows healthcare professionals to communicate effectively in one language. While this bill can be described as a technical update, this legislation will improve comprehension of basic terminology and abbreviations across state lines and better align reporting statistics – a benefit to both Wisconsin and our national healthcare partners.

As we know from the work performed by the Legislative Council Study Committee on Volunteer Firefighter and EMT shortages by Sen. Nass, Rep. Kremer, Sen. Bewley, Rep. Kolste and public members - the Study Committee was directed to examine issues related to the shortage of volunteer emergency medical technicians (EMTs) in the state, particularly in rural areas, and propose measures to address these shortages.

One of my responsibilities is to travel throughout the state, listening to our members’ concerns and help communicate them to you to improve the delivery of emergency medical services. I heard a story recently of a volunteer EMS service in rural western Wisconsin made up of four extended family members. All services are required to provide 24/7 to their communities and because of this they each took six hour shifts 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to be able to provide emergency medical service to their community of fewer than 800. One of the four of them became seriously injured and was unable to fulfill their commitment to their town. The other three simply divided up the four shifts among the three of them so that they would still be able to provide support and service to their community.

If you should have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact either myself or our lobbyist Forbes McIntosh. Thank you again for your time and commitment to this matter.