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Testimony in Support of SB 19: Terminology Changes for those with an Intellectual Disability

*Senate Committee on Government Operations, Technology, and
Consumer Protection*

February 19, 2019

Chairman Stroebel and members of the committee, thank you for holding a hearing on Senate Bill (SB) 19. I appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of this bill.

SB 19 removes the phrase “mental retardation” and its derivatives from all state administrative code, replacing it with the phrase “intellectual disability.” People with intellectual disabilities and their loved ones find the ‘R-word’ incredibly offensive; it should have no place in Wisconsin’s administrative code.

This change follows 2011 Act 126, which deleted the offensive phrase from all state statutes. However this offensive terminology can still be found in the state’s administrative code in rules promulgated by numerous state agencies. I’m pleased to partner with Rep. Jagler to address this issue to ensure that Wisconsin’s administrative code is more inclusive and respectful towards citizens with disabilities.

Thank you for your consideration of this legislation.