



## Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Tommy G. Thompson  
Governor

Charles H. Thompson  
Secretary



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**Highways &**

Date: January 29, 1998

To: Representative David Brandemuehl, Chair  
Members of the Assembly Committee on  
Transportation

From: Julie Clark, Bureau of Driver Services, DMV

Subject: LRB-4497/2 (AB- ) Driver license reciprocity with other countries

This bill will allow DMV to enter into reciprocal agreements with foreign countries, their states, provinces or legal subdivisions that have driver licensing authority.

Presently any resident of the U.S. or another country who holds an international driving permit or valid operator's license may operate for one year with that document.

This bill will allow nonresidents who plan to drive in our state after one-year or U.S. citizens who plan to operate in another country (that we have an agreement with) the following:

- Waiving of the knowledge and driving skills test for operation of Class D and M vehicles  
if the driver holds a similar license for 3 years  
if the driver is at least 21 years of age
- Issuance of a probationary license  
if the driver holds a similar license less than 3 years  
if the driver is under 21.
- Each party will retain the authority to test applicants if there is reason to believe knowledge or road testing is necessary on an individual basis.

DMV will absorb any costs to implement this proposal. No fiscal effect.

We have received calls and letters from US citizens living in Germany who have had to pay from \$400 - \$1,000 to obtain a German driver's license.

12 states offer some form of reciprocity: Alabama, Arizona, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Michigan, Oregon, N & S Carolina and Utah.



# Rep. David Brandemuehl

## Constituent Casework

CONSTITUENT

John Webster

HOME PHONE

(608) 534-6337 WORK

ADDRESS

Templeau

email SS#

webjlt@win.bright.net DATE 1-15-99 19

SITUATION:

Son Jay, is living in Germany & wants to get a driver's license. Where is law? Not yet in place - driver license reciprocity

CONTACTS:

Julie Chak Karen Schwartz 6-0054  
Bew Larson

ACTION TAKEN:

Near final draft stage of letter to Germany if everything ok - 2-4 weeks

RESOLUTION DATE:

HANDLED BY:

**Krause, Sheri**

**To:** webjjt@win.bright.net

**Subject:** driver license reciprocity w/ Germany

Mr. Webster,

I just thought I would let you know that I was again in touch with Karen Schwartz of the WisDOT. She's in charge of attempting to secure driver license reciprocity with Germany.

Ms. Schwartz said that the letters to Germany have been finalized and are ready to go, but before they can be sent, Wisconsin has to get clearance from the U.S. State Department. She thinks they will have clearance within the week since this is a standard, non-controversial request. If she runs into any problems, she's going to let me know immediately so that we can get our federal congressmen involved and get this request expedited. If everything goes smoothly, your son should be able to get a license by March. I'll let you know as soon as I hear anything else.

Sheri Krause  
Rep. Brandemuehl's office

Feb. 3, 1999

**Krause, Sheri**

**To:** webjlt@win.bright.net  
**Subject:** German driver's license

Mr. Webster,

I was just contacted again by the DOT with an update on the driver license reciprocity agreement with Germany. Everything is going well with the State Dept., but they need to work out some final terminology in order to get in compliance with some international treaties.

In case this doesn't go through in time for your son, the DOT officials have been talking directly to the German consulate in order to get an interim agreement on his behalf. Should that become necessary, they would like to know where your son is staying and how he can be reached. If you wouldn't mind passing that information along to me at your earliest convenience, I will get it to the DOT. If there is a problem with this request or if you have any other questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,  
Sheri Krause  
Research Assistant  
Office of Rep. David Brandemuehl

## **Krause, Sheri**

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**From:** Webster [webijjt@win.bright.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 04, 1999 6:54 AM  
**To:** Krause, Sheri  
**Subject:** Re: German driver's license

Hello Sheri,

My son's name and address is as follows:

Jay Webster  
Woringer Str. 10  
40211 Duesseldorf  
Germany

The telephone number as we dial it from this country is 011-49-211171.

Jay would like to have something worked out by March 5<sup>th</sup> if possible. We appreciate your interest in and help with this matter.

Thanks,

John Webster

**Kussart, Gene**

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**From:** Clark, Julie  
**To:** EMX -gkussart  
**Cc:** Schwartz, Karen; Larson, Beverly  
**Subject:** The need for reciprocity with Germany/Fr  
**Date:** Thursday, November 13, 1997 11:40AM

Presently military service dependents and people working for US firms in European countries (we have had requests specifically from Germany and France) find it very time consuming and expensive to comply with that country's driver testing and licensing standards.

--We have received calls and letters from US citizens living in Germany who have had to pay from \$400 to \$1,000 to obtain a German driver's license. The excessive fees are mainly in their training requirements and road tests. The reciprocal agreement would allow US citizens (with WI driver's license (DL)) to exchange it for the German DL, for only the cost of the DL itself. We would do the same for drivers with German DL's establishing residency in WI.

--Currently you can drive in most foreign countries with a WI DL for up to 1 year, however, several countries have shown interest in changing this to 6 months.

--12 states offer reciprocal exemptions with Germany

- Alabama
- Arizona
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- Illinois
- Kansas
- Missouri
- Michigan
- Oregon
- N. Carolina
- S. Dakota
- Utah

## Krause, Sheri

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**From:** Brandemuehl, Dave  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 15, 1998 11:50 AM  
**To:** Rep.Brandemuehl  
**Subject:** FW: Assembly Bill 760

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**From:** Roessler, Carol  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 15, 1998 11:50:00 AM  
**To:** Brandemuehl, Dave; Plache, Kim  
**Subject:** FW: Assembly Bill 760  
**Auto forwarded by a Rule**

Dear Dave and Kim,

Attached is an email I received inquiring about AB 760.

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**From:** EngelEDV(SMTP:EngelEDV@aol.com)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 15, 1998 9:52 AM  
**To:** Sen.Roessler  
**Subject:** Assembly Bill 760

Dear Senator Roessler,

Dear Senator Rissen,

My name is Melanie Johannsen and I am living abroad in Germany. I have been trying to attain my German driver's license and as you know, am having difficulty with the process. Over 20 States currently have a reciprocal agreement with foreign countries concerning translating driver's licenses. I have had correspondence with Gov. Thompson who has informed me that although he strongly agrees with the act, it must first pass the Senate.

There are several reasons why I am asking that you make it possible for Wisconsin citizens to attain their driver's licenses simply by having them translated. The agreement between Germany and other European countries that now stands is unfair to Wisconsin citizens living abroad like myself. In order to get a German license at the moment I have to have my license, birth certificate, and other papers translated. This costs about \$100. Then I have to buy the driving books to study from, \$60. After that I must take a test in which I have to know over 800 questions. Fifty questions are randomly selected and I can only have 2 incorrect. This test costs about \$250, plus I must pay a driving school in order to have the privilege to take the test. I have already done everything up to this point. After the test is taken and passed, then I can take the driver's test. First though must have driving hours and they are \$30 an hour. The final test costs about \$250, and is a full hour long. A friend of mine had to take the test 3 times before she finally attained her license. Pretty hefty compared to what Germans have to do and pay to attain their Wisconsin driver's license isn't it.

If you have any further information on this Bill or questions for me, I would be grateful if you contacted me. Unfortunately, my computer is down and so I am using a friend's. But my email address is melanie@mail.pin-net.de , or you could fax me at 011.49.4639.98411. I would prefer the fax because I am not sure when my computer will be up again, and would like to respond as soon as

possible.

Thank you so much for you time and help,

Melanie Johannsen

Embassy informal translation of FRG Ministry of  
Transportation fact sheet:

REQUIREMENTS FOR OBTAINING A PASSENGER VEHICLE DRIVERS  
LICENSE IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

I. Requirements

1. Content of the Driving Category

Passenger vehicles in the FRG fall under Category 3. This category covers vehicles with a maximum weight of no more than 7.5 tons and are allowed to tow one-axle trailers.

In 1996, the FRG will implement a division into categories as proposed by the the European Union Directive 91/439EWG (attached). Category 3 will be replaced by Category B, which will cover only passenger vehicles with a total weight of no more than 3.5 tons (see Article 3 of the Directive).

2. Minimum Age

18 years

3. Training

The applicant must attend theory classes and behind-the-wheel training at a government approved driving school.

a) Theory Classes

Duration: minimum of 12 double classes lasting 90 minutes each;

Content: road traffic rules and laws; environment friendly and energy-saving driving; rules relating to the operation of a motor vehicle; hazards in traffic; consequences of breaching traffic rules and laws.

b) Behind-the-Wheel Training

Behind-the-wheel training is divided into basic training and training for special driving skills.

Duration: There is no minimum number of driving hours specified for basic training.

Minimum duration of special training: 5 hours on major traffic or country roads, 3 hours on highways, 2 hours during dusk or darkness; (each hour lasts 45 minutes).

On average, an applicant will need a total of 30 driving lessons.

Contents of Behind-the-Wheel Training:

Technical preparation for driving; procedure for starting the car on level ground and on slopes; changing gear; using the lanes; turning off and changing lanes, reverse driving and turning the car around; monitoring the traffic, road conditions and traffic signs; driving speed, highways and major roads; overtaking; cross-roads and joining traffic; pedestrian and cyclists, stopping and parking;

anticipating behavior of other drivers; behavior in complicated traffic situations; avoiding high-risk traffic situations; environment friendly and energy-saving driving.

#### 4. Drivers License Examination

##### a) Obligatory, multi-choice written examination

Number of questions: 30

Evaluation: The questions are valued at between two to four points each, depending on their importance for road safety. The sum of points for all 30 questions is 96. The test has been failed if questions worth more than 8 points are answered wrongly. There is no time limit for answering the questions.

##### b) Behind-the-Wheel Examination

Vehicle: Passenger vehicle with a minimum speed capacity of 130 kilometers per hour, which is equipped to permit the driving instructor, who has to accompany the applicant during the examination, to use the brake and gas pedals. If the examination takes place in an automatic car, the driving permit will be restricted to such vehicles.

Minimum duration: 45 minutes.

Examination route: approximately 50 percent on inner-city roads; approximately 50 percent outside city limits, including highways, if possible.

Content: One driving test, which includes the examination of basic driving skills:

1. reverse parking
2. other parking
3. turning the car around
4. turning the car in traffic
5. starting the car on a hill.

Three of the above tasks are tested, whereby Nr. 1 or Nr. 2 are mandatory.

##### c) Qualifications of the Examiner

The examination must be taken in the presence of an official examiner or expert for motor vehicle traffic who belong to the so-called Technical Examination Offices. In general, the examiners have a university or technical college degree, at a minimum have completed an apprenticeship as a motor vehicle mechanic. Official recognition requires practical experience, training at a Technical Examination Office, as well as a special examination on the relevant subject.

#### 5. Other Requirements

Eye test; participation in a first aid course for emergency measures at the scene of an accident.

First-time drivers are issued a preliminary license valid for two years. If traffic violations are committed during this period, the license holder will have to undertake certain measures such as additional training or re-taking the examination. In some cases, the offender may have to surrender the license.

1. Recognition

Holders of U.S. drivers licenses may drive a car in Germany for one year, beginning on the day that "permanent residency" is established in Germany.

It is necessary to have an international drivers license (also required by the Geneva Convention) or a translation of the national drivers license.

2. On principle, a German drivers license is issued only after taking the full theoretical and behind-the-wheel examination (not required for holders of Utah state drivers licenses), an eye test, and a first aid course. Training at a driving school is not required.

Requirements for a transcription of a drivers license without an examinations are:

- equivalency of drivers licenses;
- dependability of drivers licenses;
- reciprocity.

Verification of the requirements is made by judging the conditions in a certain country as a whole rather than judging conditions that apply to an individual applicant of that country.

8/95