



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 · MADISON, WI 53708

TO: Assembly Committee on State Affairs and Government Operations  
FROM: Representative Keith Ripp and Senator Luther Olsen  
DATE: Wednesday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
SUBJECT: Testimony in favor of Assembly Bill 601 (Senate Bill 452)

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Thank you Chairman Weininger and Committee members for holding a hearing on Assembly Bill 601. We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony and discuss this bipartisan legislation which allows underage persons to participate in a tour of the wine-making process with or without a parent present, allowing those persons to attend with extended family and/or friends.

Wineries are located in every corner of the state and most offer tours that are as unique to each winery as the wines they make. A large majority of tour participants are often families looking for activities that everyone can enjoy together. Unfortunately, people who are under the age of 21 and unaccompanied by a parent or guardian are not allowed on the premises for a tour, and as such, are not able to participate in an educational tour of wine-production methods. Furthermore, we have heard from food science students who would like to attend tours for their major, but are unable to if they are under the age of 21.

Is it important to note that breweries are currently allowed to provide tours to unaccompanied minors in this manner. This is a common sense fix that would align wineries with breweries in regards to tour practices.

During this hearing, you will hear testimony from Wisconsin Winery owners that have firsthand knowledge of the importance of this legislation and can answer any practical questions you may have.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to speak and submit testimony in favor of Assembly Bill 601.



## State Senator Sheila Harsdorf

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Date: February 5, 2014

To: Assembly Committee on State Affairs and Government Operations

Fr: Senator Sheila Harsdorf

Re: Assembly Bill 601—Winery Tours

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Dear Chair Weininger and Committee Members,

Thank you for holding a public hearing on Assembly Bill 601 (AB 601), which would allow all minors to participate in winery tours. I regret that I am unable to testify in person due to another committee meeting.

The number of wineries opening in our state has been on the rise in the recent past and winery tours are becoming more and more popular. Currently, Wisconsin law prohibits a minor from participating in a winery tour with his or her extended family or friends. Under certain exceptions, a minor may only be in a facility that holds a license or permit to sell alcohol if the minor is accompanied by his or her parent, guardian, or spouse who is at least 21 years old.

AB 601 would allow minors to participate in a winery tour regardless of whether their parent, guardian, or spouse are present, which would align Wisconsin with what is currently permissible for brewery tours. Please note that while AB 601 allows unaccompanied minors to participate in a winery tour, it does not allow the underage sampling of wine.

AB 601 will modify statutes to make state law consistent with what is allowed for breweries and help encourage Wisconsin's growing wine industry.

I urge your support for this legislation and thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in support of AB 601. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.