



State Senator Sheila Harsdorf

Date: February 3, 2016

To: Assembly Committee on Health

From: Senator Sheila Harsdorf

RE: Assembly Bill 659 and Assembly Bill 660 – Opioid Treatment Programs and Changes to Medical Examining Board

Dear Chair Sanfelippo and Committee Members:

Thank you for holding a hearing on Assembly Bill 659 (AB 659) and Assembly Bill 660 (AB 660.) These bills are a continuation of the HOPE legislation that seeks to address the growing heroin epidemic in our state. We know that individuals often fall prey to substance abuse given the availability and accessibility of prescription drugs and other medications.

AB 659: This bill seeks to make changes to opioid treatment systems by more closely aligning program regulations with federal law. This will remove barriers currently in place that make it difficult for these programs to expand.

AB 660: This bill seeks to make changes to the authority of the Medical Examining Board (MEB) and allows the MEB, Podiatry Affiliated Credentialing Board, the Board of Nursing, the Dentistry Examining Board, and the Optometry Examining Board to issue guidelines regarding best practices in prescribing controlled substances.

This legislation seeks to move Wisconsin another step forward in the fight against drug addiction. I am pleased this legislation has received board bipartisan support and urge your passage of AB 659 and AB 660.



John Nygren

WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE ★ 89TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

**HOPE Agenda Testimony
State Rep. John Nygren
February 3, 2016**

Thank you Chair Sanfelippo and members of the Assembly Committee on Health for holding a public hearing on Assembly Bills 658, 659, 660, and 766.

These pieces of legislation are an extension of the HOPE Agenda (Heroin, Opioid Prevention and Education). Our goal with these proposals is to continue to address what many people believe to be the root of our state's heroin problem: prescription drug abuse and addiction. Studies show that, in many cases, heroin addiction begins with an addiction to prescription painkillers. Whether these medications are obtained legally or not, we need to do our best to curtail the illegal use of these dangerous substances. It is for this reason that I am offering additional HOPE Agenda bills that are aimed at fighting prescription drug abuse in Wisconsin.

The following are summaries of each of the four bills:

AB 658: This bill criminalizes the possession, manufacture, distribution, and advertisement of any substance or device which is intended to defraud, circumvent, interfere with, or provide a substitute for a bodily fluid in conjunction with a lawfully administered drug test. The penalties in this bill were mirrored from the current penalties in place for synthetic marijuana and will be applied accordingly.

AB 659: Currently, state law relating to opioid treatment programs is much more highly regulated than federal law. Wisconsin's high level of regulation has inhibited treatment programs from being able to expand. This bill streamlines aspects of state law to align certain opioid treatment program regulations with federal law.

AB 660: This bill will allow the Medical Examining Board (MEB), the Board of Nursing, the Dentistry Examining Board, and the Optometry Examining Board to issue guidelines regarding best practices in prescribing controlled substances.

AB 766: This legislation creates reporting requirements for the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP). The data collected will be reviewed and evaluated by the Controlled Substances Board (CSB) to determine the effectiveness of the PDMP and to compare actual outcomes with projected outcomes.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify before your committee today on these important pieces of legislation and welcome any questions you may have at this time.