



JERRY PETROWSKI

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

Senate Bill 319: Lawful Turns on a Red Signal

October 28, 2015

Good morning, members of the committee, and thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today on Senate Bill 319. This bill was authored at the request of the Department of Transportation. Representatives from the department are available today should you have any questions.

As many of you know, a driver is currently allowed to make a right turn when facing a red signal at an intersection, as long as he or she yields to traffic already in the intersection and lanes of moving traffic are not crossed. No turn may be made on a red signal if a sign at the intersection prohibits the turn.

In some situations, multiple right-turn lanes are available, but vehicles are not currently allowed to make a right on red from the leftmost of the turn lanes, as the vehicle must cross lanes of moving traffic. This bill would permit those types of turns, regardless if other lanes are crossed. As under current law, a local authority in charge of a roadway may still post signs to prohibit any of the turns on red. This bill simply gives the local authority a greater number of tools to manage the flow of traffic on their roads.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak on this bill. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

29TH SENATE DISTRICT

STATE CAPITOL: P.O. Box 7882 • MADISON, WISCONSIN 53707-7882
SEN.PETROWSKI@LEGIS.WISCONSIN.GOV • TELEPHONE: (608) 266-2502 • FAX: (608) 282-3569



Wisconsin Department of Transportation

www.dot.wisconsin.gov

Scott Walker
Governor

Mark Gottlieb, P.E.
Secretary

Office of the Secretary
4802 Sheboygan Avenue, Room 120B
P O Box 7910
Madison, WI 53707-7910

Telephone: 608-266-1113
FAX: 608-266-9912
E-mail: sec.exec@dot.wi.gov

DATE: October 28, 2015

TO: Members, Senate Committee on Transportation and Veterans Affairs
The Honorable Jerry Petrowski, Chair

FROM: Nate Yahn, Legislative Advisor
Wisconsin Department of Transportation

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 319 (lawful turns on a red signal)

Chairman Petrowski and Committee Members:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify in support of Wisconsin Senate Bill 319 (SB 319). SB 319 relates to lawful turns on a red signal.

Current Wisconsin law prohibits a vehicle to make a turn on red if the vehicle must cross a lane of moving traffic to do so. SB 319 allows vehicles to turn right from the leftmost right turn lane of a roadway that provides two right-turn lanes on a red signal, if no sign prohibits the turn, regardless whether lanes of moving traffic must be crossed.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) safety engineers believe that drivers in the leftmost right turn lane can safely make this turn. The driver vehicle in the leftmost lane of a dual right typically has even a better view of oncoming traffic than the vehicle in the right-most lane, which is allowed to make a right turn on red. Therefore, there is no inherent safety risk associated with allowing this movement from the leftmost lane on a red signal.

Additionally, allowing right turns on red from both designated right turn lanes can increase the operational efficiency of an intersection. The Department remains committed to providing Wisconsin residents and businesses with the safest and most efficient transportation system. SB 319 will eliminate confusion over lawful right hand turns on red that currently exists at intersections with dual right hand turn lanes and provide a more efficient flow of traffic.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (608) 266-1114.