



Van H. Wanggaard

Wisconsin State Senator

April 9, 2015

Testimony in Favor of Senate Bill 81

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for having me here today to testify in favor of Senate Bill 81, which limits the ability of municipalities to create new occupational licenses or fees. I am happy to join Representative Kooyenga in bringing this legislation forward.

Municipalities will often impose burdensome licensing requirements that are duplicative or exceed state standards. Sometimes, existing professionals and businesses will advocate for these new occupational licensing requirements as a means of protecting their “turf” and crowding out potential competitors. This over-regulation via occupational licensing serves as a barrier to those looking to enter a profession and places a particular burden on low and middle-income individuals. In addition, these requirements also harm consumers by decreasing competition, and increasing startup costs.

Under SB 81, local communities may not impose any occupational fees or licensing requirements beyond those already regulated. The bill also prohibits municipalities from imposing licensing requirements and fees for professional photographers. Let me emphasize that - all existing local occupational licenses will remain in effect except for photographers. In addition, we will be bringing forward an amendment that will prevent municipalities from creating additional licensing and fees for contractors already regulated by the Department of Safety and Professional Services.

As an example of this over-regulation and barrier to employment let me point out the City of Milwaukee’s regulatory burden on professional photographers and bill posters. Even though they pose no danger to public health or safety, if a photographer or a bill poster wants to operate in the City of Milwaukee they follow this process:

First, they must register with the Department of Financial Institutions, THEN,

They must obtain a Wisconsin Seller’s Permit from the Department of Revenue, THEN,

They must obtain an Occupancy Permit from the City of Milwaukee, THEN,

They must provide a photograph to the City of Milwaukee, THEN,

They will be fingerprinted by the Milwaukee Police Department, THEN,

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They have to pay a \$400 license fee for bill posters and a \$100 license fee for photographers, and THEN,

They wait 6-8 weeks for the city to approve or potentially deny a license application

This bill is a common sense proposal that will reduce the regulatory burden that municipalities can impose on small businesses and their employees' ability to work. Occupational licensing should focus on protecting the public health and safety and not serve as a barrier for individuals who want to work in a given field.

Thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions.



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Senate Committee on Elections and Local Government
Public Hearing
12:00 PM – 201 Southeast

Chairman LeMahieu and Members of the Committee:

I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of SB 81. This legislation prohibits the creation of additional occupational fees or licensing requirements by any political subdivision.

Forgoing these additional fees and red tape provides all future entrepreneurs and local businesses a consistency in their local requirements. In metropolitan areas such as Milwaukee contractors and other professionals conduct business in dozens of municipalities. If every municipality required a professional license the paperwork and fees would become too burdensome leading to less time serving consumers and more time complying with government regulation. Excessive licensing is particularly harmful to small and minority owned businesses that tend to have smaller operations and do not have the back office staff that larger companies do.

This bill does not eliminate the fees and requirements that are currently in place with exception to any additional occupational fee or licensing requirement made for photographers. We are open to amendments to the bill to broaden the prohibition of existing licenses in place if a case is made that the license is redundant, unnecessary or is being utilized to prevent competition.

Thank you again for taking the time to discuss SB 81. I am open to any questions the committee may have.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dale P. Kooyenga". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Dale P. Kooyenga