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STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 75th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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Committee on Regulatory Licensing Reform

Chairman Horlacher and members of the committee:

Thank you for holding a hearing on Assembly Bill 584, which allows the governor to waive certain fees for licenses, approvals, or other authorizations in the wake of natural disaster that leads to a state of emergency being declared.

I'm sure that many of you saw the headlines from my district and many others last summer – severe storms caused significant damage across the state of Wisconsin. As crews scrambled to restore power, water, and communications, many Wisconsinites were also scrambling to replace documents that had been destroyed in the storms – documents such as driver's licenses. We often forget how crucial these basic documents are, but the storms were a reminder.

In an effort to ease this transition, the Barron County Division of Motor Vehicles opened a temporary service center for those affected by the storm, reissuing drivers' licenses, vehicle titles, and ID cards for free.

However, current state law does not allow any agency to waive a fee for these documents, regardless of the circumstances. This put the DMV out of compliance with state law. This bill is a humanitarian gesture to recognize that in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, Wisconsinites should not worry about combing through the debris to find their wallets before getting their drivers' licenses replaced. Once the governor has declared a state of emergency, he should also be able to give the relevant departments a waiver on charging fees.

It is important to note that this bill only applies to the reissue of permits and licenses – new documents will still have a fee attached.

Thank you, and I'm happy to answer any questions.