



RICK GUNDRUM

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 58TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Thursday, May 2, 2019

Room 225 Northwest

Testimony on Assembly Bill 135

First and foremost, I would like to thank Chairman Spiros and the members of the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety for holding a public hearing on Assembly Bill 135 and providing me with the opportunity to join Representative Rohrkaste in testifying in favor of this legislation.

As Representative Rohrkaste alluded to, Assembly Bill 135 is a straightforward piece of legislation that expands the opportunity for the use of non-lethal force. The bill simply allows individuals who are already licensed by the state to carry a firearm in connection with their professional duties to also carry an electric weapon, such as a Taser, for the same purpose. This legislation provides licensed and trained security officers with the option of using a non-lethal alternative to a firearm when tasked with de-escalating a potentially dangerous situation.

Assembly Bill 135 was drafted in collaboration with individuals who make a living as private detectives, investigators and security personnel. You will hear from some of these individuals today regarding their day-to-day work and the policies that guide their use of force. A sizable majority of said detectives, investigators and security professionals have transitioned from careers in law enforcement, where they were put through comprehensive training and continuing education on the principles underlying the use of force continuum.

Thank you for your time and attention, and I hope you can place your support behind this legislation. Representative Rohrkaste and I would open to taking any of your questions.



MIKE ROHRKASTE

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 55TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

To: Representative Spiros and members of the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

From: Representative Mike Rohrkaste, 55th Assembly District

Date: May 2, 2019

Re: 2019 Assembly Bill 135

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of Assembly Bill 135, allowing for licensed professionals who are already carrying firearms to also carry an electric weapon like a Taser.

This legislation was brought up by industry professionals, some of whom you will hear from today. This gives licensed security professionals a conspicuous deterrent as well as an important step in the use of force continuum.

The state of Wisconsin licenses private detectives, private investigators, and private security personnel under §440.26, Wis. stats. A further license is available to those individuals – the ability to carry a firearm while on duty. The rules for that are governed by administrative code, under chapter SPS 34. A final level of government oversight over this profession is that the firearms training guide must be approved by the Wisconsin Law Enforcement Standards Board.

If an individual is vetted by all those levels of licensure, and then undergoes regular training on firearm safety and proficiency, that person will be able to carry a firearm while on duty. However, a firearm and lethal force should be thought of as a last resort. We should be allowing these individuals to de-escalate a situation if needed.

A Taser gives licensed professionals two benefits. First, a potential offender might think twice about violence or wrongdoing if that person sees a Taser on a security officer's hip – something that pepper spray may not accomplish, and that lethal force would be too extreme a response to. Second, it allows a security officer to, at a distance, utilize a response that is short of lethal force.

We are already allowing licensed security professional to carry firearms. We should give them the option to carry an electric weapon if they determine it is in their best interest. This is a good bill, and I thank both those in the field who brought it forward and this committee for its consideration.