



## State Senator Sheila Harsdorf

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**Date:** October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
**To:** Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
**Fr:** Senator Sheila Harsdorf  
**Re:** Senate Bill 160— modifying administrative rules related to maintenance and use standards for oxygen equipment in nursing homes.

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Dear Chair Vukmir and Committee Members,

Thank you for holding a public hearing on Senate Bill 160 (SB 160), which seeks to modify the Department of Health Services' (DHS) administrative code to require oxygen equipment to be maintained and used in accordance with current standards of practice and manufacturers' recommendations.

Under current law, a nursing home is required to change oxygen tubing every five days, despite the fact that manufacturers' recommendations provide for longer usage periods. A constituent, who was living in a nursing home, brought this issue to my attention after raising objections with her care facility which was replacing the tubing more often than necessary. In speaking with nurses, DHS, and other health care professionals, I learned that this mandate is obsolete and contributes to higher health care costs.

SB 160 proposes a commonsense change that would modify the current rules regarding storage, sterilization, and the timing of replacement to require the equipment be maintained and used in accordance with current standards of practice and manufacturers' recommendations. The proposal's language ensures that the statute will not become outdated with advances in medical technology and has been drafted in consultation with the Department of Health Services and health care provider groups.

In response to a question at the public hearing in the Assembly Committee on Health on this legislation, asking if there were additional places in DHS administrative code that we could add the modified language, I have introduced Senate Amendment 1 to SB 160. This amendment would establish that the oxygen equipment at facilities serving individuals with developmental disabilities will also be maintained and used in accordance with current standards of practice and manufacturers' recommendations.

I urge your support of SB 160 as a means of controlling health care costs for consumers and eliminating a wasteful and ineffective mandate on health care providers. Thank you again for holding a public hearing and for your consideration of this legislation.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

# KATHY BERNIER

October 13, 2015

**To: Assembly Committee on Health**

**From: Rep. Kathy Bernier**

**Re: Assembly Bill 242 (Modifying administrative rules related to maintenance and use standards for oxygen equipment in nursing homes)**

Dear Chairman Vukmir and Committee Members,

Thank you scheduling Senate Bill 160 for today's public hearing. SB 160 bill makes a simple but effective change to existing administrative code through the Department of Health Services with regard to oxygen equipment maintenance in nursing homes.

Current law requires nursing home staff to replace oxygen tubing every five days despite manufacture's replacement recommendations providing for a much longer lifespan on such equipment. Senate Bill 160 simply modifies the Department of Health Services' (DHS) administrative code to require oxygen equipment be maintained and used in accordance with current standards of practice and manufacturers' recommendations.

Senate Bill 160, without opposition and with support from aging and long term care groups including Leading Age, the Wisconsin Health Care Association and the State of Wisconsin Board on Aging and Long Term Care, identifies an outdated administrative code and provides a straightforward and commonsense solution that will save precious staff time and resources in nursing homes. Further, SB 160 will ensure that standards of maintenance are preserved over time should maintenance requirements change as advances in technology and manufacturing are realized.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration of Senate Bill 160 today. I urge your support and welcome further conversation on this topic in the future.

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