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Dear Chairman Testin and members of the Committee on Workforce Development, Military Affairs, and Senior Issues.

Thank you for taking the time today to discuss the "Red Arrow Clubs" and the importance of recognizing members of the 32nd Infantry Division. The 32nd Infantry Division was originally formed from National Guard units from Wisconsin and Michigan to fight in the First World War. The division takes its symbol, a red arrow piercing a red line as it was the first allied division to pierce the German Hindenburg Line of defense. This symbol signifies its tenacity in piercing the enemy line and why it's known as the Red Arrow Division.

During World War II, the Red Arrow Division was among the first units to engage in combat operations in 1942 and continued to fight the holdouts after the Japanese surrendered.

The 32nd logged a total of 654 days of combat during World War II, more than any other United States Army division. By 1967, the 32nd Infantry Division was made up completely of individuals from Wisconsin was reorganized as the 32nd Infantry Brigade. It's the largest unit in the Wisconsin Army National Guard.

The 32nd Infantry Brigade has remained active. In February 2009, the 32nd Brigade deployed 3,200 members on a fourteen-month deployment to Iraq, its largest deployment since World War II.

The legacy of the 32nd Infantry Division is well celebrated in Wisconsin. Wisconsin Highway 32 is named in honor of the 32nd Infantry Division, and all highway 32 markers carry the Red Arrow insignia. Kenosha, Marinette, and Milwaukee all have Red Arrow Parks built in dedication to the division. The Wisconsin legislature created an incorporation filing exception for "Red Arrow Clubs" in 1939. At the time, membership was limited to World War I veterans. It was amended to include members of the division who served in World War II and in 1987 membership was expanded to include those who were involved in the Berlin Crisis of 1961.

However; despite more recent mobilization of the 32nd Division, the state statutes have not been updated to include those members. This bill corrects this.

This bill will expand the membership eligibility of the Red Arrow Club. Under this bill, the Red Arrow Club membership allows members of the 32nd Division who served at any time from World War II; members who served in the 32nd Division in the U.S. Army; or members who served with the 32nd Infantry Brigade or the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team. This also includes the Wisconsin Army National Guard, in any conflict, deployment, peacekeeping operation, or domestic response if the member was deployed in a federal or state status or conducted training to carry out such missions.

These clubs already exist among the community. The camaraderie and mutual trust they all have knowing they all have something in common is beneficial to the members who participate.

Thank you again, Chairman and members of the committee for accepting my testimony. I hope you will join me in supporting our Wisconsin veterans through your support of SB 461.



PATRICK TESTIN

STATE SENATOR

DATE: January 10th, 2018
RE: Testimony on 2017 Senate Bill 461
TO: Senate Committee on Workforce Development, Military Affairs and Senior Issues
FROM: Senator Patrick Testin

Thank you members of the Senate Committee on Workforce Development, Military Affairs and Senior Issues for accepting my testimony on Senate Bill 461, relating to the incorporation of Red Arrow Clubs.

The United States 32nd Infantry Division was originally formed from Michigan and Wisconsin Army National Guard Units to serve the nation in the First World War. In 1940, the 32nd Division was once again mobilized in order to increase the size of the United States Army. Following its mobilization, the Division was shipped to the Pacific Theatre of War in 1942. In 1961, the Division was mobilized yet again during the Berlin Crisis.

Then in 1967, the 32nd Division was reduced to the 32nd Infantry Brigade. Following that time until the turn of the century, the 32nd Division was ready to protect the country and Wisconsinites during times of need.

More than one hundred 32nd Infantry Brigade Units reported for active duty and provided security for two years at Wisconsin airbases following the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11th, 2001. In 2009, the Brigade, now named the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, deployed for a year to Iraq. This deployment of combat soldiers from the Wisconsin National Guard was the largest since the Second World War. Now the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team continues to stand at the ready to protect from future threats to our state and nation.

The Wisconsin Legislature created a Department of Financial Institutions incorporation filing exemption for 32nd 'Red Arrow' Clubs across the state back in 1939. At that time, the membership was limited to individuals who had served in World War I, but the membership has been expanded multiple times to include those who were later mobilized. In 1945, it was expanded to veterans of the Second World War and in 1987, the membership was increased to those who were mobilized during the Berlin Crisis.

However; despite subsequent mobilization of the 32nd Division, the state statutes have not been updated to reflect that. This bill aims to correct that.

Today, all the veterans who had served in World War I have passed away. Those who served in World War II and during the Berlin Crisis are aging quickly, and membership has not been expanded to be more inclusive to other Wisconsin veterans.

This bill will modify the membership requirements needed for a Red Arrow Club to be eligible for the incorporation filing exemption that was originally created in 1939. Under this bill, the Red Arrow Club membership will be updated to allow the following persons: 1) members of the 32nd Division who served at any time from World War II; 2) members who served in the 32nd Division in the U.S. Army; or 3) members who served with the 32nd Infantry Brigade or the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Wisconsin Army National Guard, in any conflict, deployment, peacekeeping operation, or domestic response if the member was deployed in a federal or state status or conducted training to carry out such missions.

Following the public hearing held in the Assembly Committee on Financial Institutions last week, Representative Skowronski and I decided to amend Senate Bill 461 to preserve the membership of individuals who served our nation in World War I. The amendment we are introducing will continue to allow veterans who served in World War I to be recognized as members of a Red Arrow Club, despite the fact they may have passed.

Thank you again members of the committee for accepting my testimony. I hope you will join me in supporting our Wisconsin veterans through your support of Senate Bill 461.