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# JAMES W. EDMING

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 87<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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## **Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 744** *Senate Committee on Health and Human Services* February 6, 2018

Thank you, Madam Chair and committee members for holding this public hearing today on Senate Bill (SB) 744. I would like to thank Senator Petrowski for working with me on this important legislation.

There is nothing quite like a Wisconsin summer. Our many lakes, streams, and forests allow our state to offer some of the best outdoor recreational opportunities in the world and make Wisconsin a great place to spend a week or two away at camp. Kids come from all around the nation to attend summer camps in Wisconsin. These camps are located in all corners of the state and are an important part of the state and local economy.

Recreational activities carry the risk of injury and camp activities are no exception. Many summer camps rely on volunteer doctors who give a week or two of their summer to serve as a camp doctor. Camp doctors ensure the safety of both campers and staff. While the vast majority of injuries treated by a camp doctor are minor (i.e. rashes, twisted ankles), having a doctor on hand provides an extra level of care that should be encouraged.

Many physicians who volunteer as a camp doctor are licensed in another state. Current law requires these very capable doctors to obtain a temporary license from the State of Wisconsin even if they are only volunteering for one week. Many of the requirements to receive this temporary license are very time-consuming and camps are finding it harder to find physicians who are willing to go through this lengthy process just to volunteer for a week or two. Some camp doctors have said that it is more work to obtain the temporary license than to work at the camp itself.

SB 744 seeks to solve this problem by allowing a physician licensed in another state or territory of the United States or a foreign country or province to practice at a camp in Wisconsin for up to 20 working days in a year. To qualify for this exemption, the licensure standards where the physician is licensed must be substantially equivalent to those in Wisconsin. Also, a physician operating under this exemption would only be permitted to treat campers and staff.

Madam Chair and members, thank you again for holding this hearing today and I ask for your support of SB 744.



# JERRY PETROWSKI

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

*SB 744- Camp Doctors*

February 6, 2018

Good morning, members of the committee, and thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today on Senate Bill 744, which extends the opportunity for doctors outside of Wisconsin to volunteer their services at Wisconsin summer camps.

We wait months for the opportunity to enjoy summers in Wisconsin. The lakes and forests that spread across our state create an ideal setting for kids to come together at one of the many summer camps offered here. These recreational and educational camps exist in all corners of Wisconsin and serve a positive role in state and local economies.

During a child's visit to camp, there is always the possibility of minor injuries like a twisted ankle or a small rash. Many summer camps rely on volunteer doctors to provide care to their campers, and for parent's it is reassuring to know a licensed physician will be there to provide a range of first aid to their child if needed.

Current law requires doctors from other states to apply for a temporary license, which includes a lengthy process I have been told can take weeks to complete. Camps are struggling to find physicians willing to go through this process just to volunteer for a week or two. By removing this requirement, we look to ease the process for doctors and ultimately make summer camps safer for everyone.

At the request of the Department of Safety and Professional Services and the Assembly Committee on Health, we have made a few simple changes in Senate Amendment 1. First, additional language was added to ensure the physician is in good standing and that the bill only applies to licensed recreational and educational camps. Second, the Department of Safety and Professional Services has requested the physician notify the Medical Examining Board prior to practicing at a camp. Finally, the amendment delays the effective date 60 days to allow the board to create the notification form required under the bill.

The companion to this bill, AB 870, and its amendment passed unanimously out of the Assembly Committee on Health and I am hoping for the same support from my peers in the Senate.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

29TH SENATE DISTRICT

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# Birch Trail Camp for Girls

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Thank you Mr. Chairman, my name is Gabe Chernov and I am the owner and director of Birch Trail camp for Girls, a summer camp for children in Minong, WI. Birch Trail has been in operation since 1959 and in my family for 2 generations. My parents purchased the camp in 1985 and ran it prior to my wife and I operating the camp.

We (like many camps in Wisconsin) rely on volunteer doctors to work with other medical professionals to help keep our campers & staff healthy and safe. A camp doctor will typically treat bumps, bruises, rashes and the occasional twisted ankle. Unfortunately, the current process for camp doctors to become licensed in our state is a barrier for many. With excessive paperwork & testing, the process can often take up to 6 months. Minnesota, a state having a summer camp heritage similar to Wisconsin, has a much simpler process for camp doctor licensure that has served Minnesota campers and camps safely and effectively.

We need this bill because the current law makes it difficult and very time consuming for volunteer doctors to obtain a Wisconsin license. Most of these doctors spend 1 week at camp and our fear is that more doctors will stop volunteering because of the difficulty in obtaining a license.

The safety and care of our campers is our main priority and having an easier path for volunteer doctors to care for our children would help us keep our campers and staff healthy and safe.

Thank you for your time and for helping to keep our campers and staff safe.

Sincerely,

Gabe Chernov  
Director, Birch Trail Camp

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## CAMP AGAWAK

Mary Fried, *Director*

*Members of the Senate, thank you for your time and for allowing me to address the importance of Senate Bill 744.*

*My name is Mary Fried, and I am the owner and director of **Camp Agawak for Girls, in Minocqua, established in 1921.** I've been the owner and director of Agawak for the past 30 years. We service over 200 plus campers and a staff of 125 daily during the summer. There are more than 200 hundred various camps in Wisconsin serving our youth. We also provide a substantial source of revenue for the local economy as most camps do. Camp Agawak gathers people from around the country and world to experience overnight camp.*

*Many camps in Wisconsin rely on volunteer doctors who provide common medical care for campers and staff. Most of these physicians are licensed in their home state rather than Wisconsin. The current process for camp doctors to become licensed in Wisconsin, compared to other states like Minnesota, is lengthier and very time consuming. Because of this, many doctors don't want to hassle with all the paper work and the time commitment involved to obtain the license. This situation causes a shortage of doctors for Wisconsin camps and jeopardizes the overall health of campers and staff.*

*We need Senate Bill 744 to pass so the process to obtain a license is made easier, involves less steps and is less complicated for physicians to complete.*

*All of us want to keep our youth safe and healthy. Passing Senate Bill 744 will certainly allow us to better care for our campers and staff while they attend summer camp.*

*Thank you for your time and consideration.*

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Mary Fried'.

Mary Fried