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Good Morning Chairman Sanfelippo and Committee Members,

I want to thank you for hearing my testimony today. Assembly Bill 583 is legislation that will create a licensure exemption for military nurses and physician assistants who come to Wisconsin as part of their military duty assignments. Currently members would need to obtain a full Wisconsin license, which can take several weeks to months to get.

This bill would allow the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) to have the honor of hosting military members during their rotational medical training. The mission being to achieve zero preventable injury related deaths, both in the community and on the battlefield. This is similar to a partnership program that is already in place for military physicians and perfusionists. Military and civilian members that are able to train in Wisconsin will advance skills in resuscitation and trauma surgery. These updated skills will give everyone involved lifesaving knowledge that they can bring back for future deployments or crisis situations within the state.

Unfortunately, the licensure laws in Wisconsin are a barrier to our military members. AB 583 is a simple fix that would benefit many in the long run

Thank you for your time today,

Ken Skowronski .

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ken Skowronski".



DALE KOOYENGA
STATE SENATOR · 5TH DISTRICT

State Capitol · P.O. Box 7882 · Madison, WI 53707-7882 · (608) 266-2512

January 7, 2020

TO: Assembly Committee on Health
FR: Senator Dale Kooyenga
RE: support for Assembly Bill 583 – Military healthcare provider license exemption

Thank you for holding a hearing on this common sense bill; the origin of which comes from the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW). Assembly Bill 583 will assist military personnel with their rotational medical training through a partnership program between the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) and the US Army called Joining Forces Military-Civilian partnership.

This new partnership is a significant honor for MCW and Wisconsin, with the mission to achieve zero preventable deaths from injury, both in the community and on the battlefield. This US Army program is designed to partner with private institutions to advance the trauma surgery and resuscitation skills for licensed providers within the US Army.

However, due to Wisconsin's licensure process and laws, only military physicians and perfusionists are exempted when participating in this type of rotational program. As a result, a military physician assistant (PA) or military nurse coming to our state to train within this program – even for just a 4-week rotation – is required to obtain a full Wisconsin medical license. MCW has already run into licensing delays for an incoming military PA, and expects more challenges as this new program continues.

DSPS has confirmed their hands are tied on not allowing an exemption, or even a temporary work-around to this issue, due to the way the statutes are written. AB 583 would exempt those who are performing official duties for the armed services or federal health services of the US from provisions for the duration of their rotational stay.

The bill simply adds military PAs and military nurses to the existing statutory licensure exemption for military physicians. This legislation will help streamline the process of bringing additional military nurses and PAs into Wisconsin to train, and will advance the trauma surgery and resuscitation skills of these licensed providers within the US Army.

Military operations are evolving in preparation for the next conflict. The environments of previous wars, including the Global War on Terror, allowed for quick evacuation of the injured. However, this may not always be the case, as the US military may not consistently dominate air space. This would result in deployed medics having to treat injuries for longer intervals until a safe evacuation occurs. It is our plan to assist military personnel in their continuing fight against threatening forces.

The United States Army, along with the Medical College of Wisconsin, has created three programs allowing Army medics to travel to Milwaukee. The program will improve and sustain their knowledge in preparation for potential future deployments.

These programs would aid deployed military medical personnel in gaining trauma, operating room, and intensive care unit experiences, including both adults and children.

We all need to do our part to help save the lives of those injured while protecting our freedom.

Thank you for your attention to this important legislation. I respectfully ask for your support of AB 583.



TO: Honorable Members of the Assembly Committee on Health

FROM: Stephen Hargarten, MD, MPH, *Professor; Associate Dean of Global Health; Director, Comprehensive Injury Center*

David Gourlay, MD, *Professor and Chief, Pediatric Surgery; Medical Director, Children's Wisconsin Trauma Program*

Tom Hove, *Senior Administrator, Division of Trauma & Acute Care Surgery*

DATE: January 7, 2020

RE: Support for Assembly Bill 583 - Related to Practicing as a Physician Assistant or Nurse while Performing Official Duties for the Armed Services or Federal Health Services

The Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) strongly supports Assembly Bill 583 (AB 583), legislation extending Wisconsin's current licensure exemption for military physicians, to also include military nurses and military physician assistants (PA's) who come to Wisconsin within the performance of their official duties as members of the armed services.

This proposed legislation is the result of an exciting new partnership between MCW and the United States Army. MCW's surgical faculty oversee the only adult level 1 trauma center in eastern Wisconsin at Froedtert Hospital, and one of two pediatric level 1 trauma centers in the state at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin. MCW has recently established collaborative training agreements with the US Army, in accordance with the National Defense Authorization Act of 2017, which mandates the Department of Defense partner with civilian trauma centers to advance the trauma surgery and resuscitation skills for armed services medical personnel to better prepare them for casualty care in tactical environments such as combat zones and disaster response areas.

MCW's partnership with the US Army includes three distinct training programs:

1. Provider Prolonged Field Care Program; a 4-week didactic and clinical immersion rotation at MCW for Army special operations physicians and physician assistants to train on keeping critically ill and injured soldiers alive within active combat zones where medevac assets may not be immediately available. MCW is the first and only program for this training in the country;
2. Trauma Team Training Program; embeds the nurses and doctors of a Forward Surgical Resuscitation Team for 3 years into our trauma centers, so they stay current with critical skills necessary for them as they intermittently deploy world-wide. MCW is currently just one of three platforms for this program nationally;
3. Medical Proficiency Training Program; a 4-week clinical immersion rotation in trauma, emergency medicine, intensive care, and orthopedics for US Army Special Operations Combat Medics and Special Forces Medical Sergeants. This is an official program of record for the US Army, and we are one of several sites nationwide.

MCW's selection as a partner site for the US Army is a significant honor. Unfortunately, Wisconsin's licensure laws currently serve as a barrier to administering the program by requiring providers participating in a 4-week rotation to obtain a full Wisconsin license, which can take anywhere from several weeks to months.

MCW has been in contact with the Wisconsin Department of Safety & Professional Services to discuss the licensure exemption process. DSPS confirmed their hands are tied statutorily on not allowing an exemption, or finding a temporary work-around to this issue.

Therefore, a statutory change is necessary to streamline MCW's ability to continually train US Army health care providers in Wisconsin. This change will be particularly beneficial to the providers within the first training program I discussed, the *Provider Prolonged Field Care Program*.

Interestingly, the military physicians who enter this program are exempt from obtaining a medical license under current Wisconsin law, but the military PA's entering the program must obtain a full license. MCW intends to offer this 4-week rotation program to US Army personnel six times this first year, and up to ten times per year in subsequent years. The requirement to obtain licensure for the military PA's is causing concern that MCW may not be able to administer this program as efficiently as would be ideal, which could ultimately put it at long-term risk.

Another benefit of this statutory change, which will hopefully never come to fruition, is that if a health crisis ever occurred in Wisconsin in which military health care providers were needed to respond, Wisconsin law would provide immediate access for military PA's and military nurses to come to Wisconsin's aid.

Once again, this legislation will simply extend Wisconsin's existing licensure exemption for military physicians who come to Wisconsin on behalf of their armed services duties, to also include military PA's and military nurses.

MCW respectfully requests your support for this legislation and appreciates your consideration. If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact Nathan Berken, MCW's Director of Government Relations, at 414.955.8588, or nberken@mcw.edu.