



# DALE KOOYENGA

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October 30, 2013

Assembly Committee on State Affairs and Government Operations  
Public Hearing  
10:00 AM – 328 Northwest

Chairman Weininger and Members of the Committee:

I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of AB 404/SB 337. This legislation aims to streamline the examination process, so students and professionals may enter the workforce quicker upon graduation.

This legislation allows a student to take an examination for credentials without completing their postsecondary education. The Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) or a credentialing board may not limit a student from taking their examination before they complete their education. The only exception is for a registered nurse (RN) or a licensed practical nurse (LPN) under the amendment. These students must receive approval from their school of nursing in order to take their exam before completion of their postsecondary education. Standards and conditions of licensure would remain the same under the bill. Applicants would simply be given more flexibility in the order in which their licensure requirements could be completed.

AB 404/SB 337 will allow students to be a part of Wisconsin's growing workforce in a faster, more streamlined way.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dale P. Kooyenga".

Dale P. Kooyenga



# Frank Lasee

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR  
FIRST SENATE DISTRICT



## Senator Lasee's Testimony Senate Bill 337—Efficient DSPS Licensure Bill

Senate Bill 337 is a simple and common sense way to get students out of the classroom and into the workforce more efficiently. The bill gives students the opportunity to take their licensing exam prior to the completion of their studies. That way they will be eligible to enter the workforce much sooner than if they were required to wait for a test date to come available after they graduate from their training school.

The bill does not change any of the requirements for a student to obtain a license. Even if they pass the licensure exam early, they do not qualify to receive their license until the school transmits the course completion certificate to DSPS.

Allowing flexibility in the order of steps a young professional must take to obtain an occupational license makes sense and will make it easier for people to get work in the field that they studied in school. This will be good for Wisconsin's workforce.



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### Testimony to the Assembly Committee on State Affairs and Government Operations

Jeff Weigand, Legislative Liaison

Department of Safety and Professional Services

Assembly Bill 404 and Senate Bill 337

October 30, 2013

Chairman Weininger and committee members, on behalf of Secretary Dave Ross, thank you for taking up Assembly Bill 404 and Senate Bill 337 and for the opportunity to appear before you today.

AB 404 and SB 337 are part of Governor Scott Walker's Developing Our Workforce legislative package. Specifically, the bills seek to give aspiring licensees the opportunity to get licensed and enter the workforce faster. The basic concept is to allow license applicants the option of completing their exam and application requirements in advance of their education program or school completion. By completing their application and examination requirements in advance, applicants will be cutting down on the lag time between college or schooling completion and license issuance. Here is an example of the current process that must be followed for many professions that we license:

- 1) Graduation from a program or school
- 2) Application for licensure to DSDPS
- 3) Scheduling and taking a licensure exam
- 4) Wait for exam results and application processing/ license issuance.

With AB 404 and SB 337 we will say that all existing licensure requirements need to be met but it is up to the applicant to determine in which order they are completed. This system already exists for a few professions that we license. Here is one good example:

#### **Physical Therapists**

The Physical Therapist's licensure exam (National Physical Therapy Examination) is only given 4 times a year. (2013 dates - April 7th, July 27th, September 26th and December 5<sup>th</sup>) If a Physical Therapist student graduated in May they potentially would have to wait at least 2 months just to take the national exam. After passing the national exam it takes an additional 7 days for DSDPS to be notified that an applicant has passed or failed the exam. Then, it takes roughly 7 additional days for DSDPS to issue the license. Starting this year, Physical Therapists had the opportunity to enter the workforce up to 2-3 months earlier because they could take and pass their exam before they officially completed their college requirement. At the April exam this year, 37 people took advantage of this early exam opportunity and 36 passed.

Standards and conditions of licensure would remain the same under the bill. Applicants would simply be given more flexibility in the order in which their licensure requirements could be completed. (OVER)

AB 404 and SB 337 are an important part of the department's overall vision for delivering professional credentials faster – and to eventually have a credentialing system that allows new graduates the chance to enter the workforce immediately upon graduation.

On October 15<sup>th</sup> SB 337 passed the Senate unanimously. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today, and I would be happy to take any questions at this time.