



HOWARD MARKLEIN

STATE SENATOR • 17TH SENATE DISTRICT

Senator Howard Marklein Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 249

Thank you Mr. Chairman and thank you members of the Transportation and Veterans Affairs Committee for allowing me to testify on Senate Bill 249. This is a simple bill that seeks to address a problem I hear often from constituents and local law enforcement members.

Current law only requires the use of headlights during hours of darkness. This leaves many Wisconsin drivers without their headlights on during daylight hours when visibility may be limited. With the advent of sensors and automatic headlights many drivers are relying on their vehicle lights to automatically turn on. These sensors are not reliable during daytime hours in the midst of rain, fog, or inclement weather.

Just last week, I was driving into Madison during a heavy downpour and was amazed to see how many drivers didn't have their lights on. Many on the road don't realize that having your lights on in these conditions isn't necessarily for you to see better, but for others to see your car more clearly. Currently in our state, a motorist who does not have their headlights on during periods of darkness can be subject to a fine of not less than \$10. This bill extends that requirement for headlight use to time when visibility is limited to 500 feet, including daylight hours.

According to AAA (American Automobile Association), Wisconsin and Hawaii are the only two states that currently do not require headlight usage during inclement weather. Most states have a visibility range of 500 to 1000 feet when headlights are required. I am hopeful this legislation can be used by our law enforcement as an opportunity to increase driver awareness about this problem and make our roads safer.

Thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to testify in support of this bill, and I would welcome any questions.