



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

KATHY BERNIER

October 28, 2015

**Senate Committee on Sporting Heritage,
Mining, and Forestry**

Testimony on Assembly Bill 112 / Senate Bill 88

Good morning Chairman Tiffany and committee members. Thank you for scheduling AB 112 and SB 88 for this public hearing, and for allowing me the opportunity to present testimony in favor of the bills.

This initiative was brought to me by a constituent, J.R. Black, who unfortunately is unable to be here today. J.R. approached me and told a story about his father-in-law, Dan Rossow, who has been a long time hunter but was unable to participate last year because he was unable to travel from Boyd to the Tomah VA Hospital in order to have the DNR Disability Permit Authorization Form completed by his primary care physician. This authorization allows Mr. Rossow special permissions, because of his disability, during hunting season.

By allowing physician assistants and nurse practitioners (referred to in these bills as “advance practice nurse prescribers”) to

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sign and certify disability designations for the DNR disability permit, Mr. Russow would have been able to participate in the 2014 deer hunt.

As you are likely aware, there are wide-spread reports of impending doctor shortages. This is especially - and already - true in rural areas of Wisconsin. A 2011 report by the Wisconsin Hospital Association estimates that by 2030 Wisconsin will face a shortage of 2,000 doctors that will “severely limit access to health care services in the state – particularly in northern Wisconsin.” With an aging population, the additional options to save time and travel will be a big help to folks like Mr. Rossow and ensure disabled hunters continue to have the ability to participate in Wisconsin’s sporting heritage.

Again, thank you Mr. Chairman and committee members for your interest in these bills and for holding this hearing. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.



DEVIN LEMAHIEU

STATE SENATOR

DATE: October 28, 2015
RE: **Testimony on 2015 Senate Bill 88 and 2015 Assembly Bill 112**
TO: The Senate Committee on Sporting Heritage, Mining, and Forestry
FROM: Senator Devin LeMahieu

Mr. Chairman and committee members, thank you for taking time today to discuss Senate Bill 88 and Assembly Bill 112, regarding disabled hunting permits.

Wisconsin law provides for a variety of hunting, fishing and recreational use permits designed to help people with disabilities enjoy the state's natural resources. DNR disability permits include:

- hunting from a stationary vehicle
- using a laser sight
- using an adaptive device to facilitate the use of a firearm
- fishing while trolling with an electric motor
- using a mobility device on department lands
- participation in disabled deer hunt
- discounted fishing license (\$7)

Senate Bill 88 and Assembly Bill 112 will simply add physician assistants and advanced nurse prescribers (nurse practitioners) to the list of medical professionals that can verify a person's disability in order to approve their special DNR permit. Currently, only physicians, chiropractors, podiatrists, and optometrists are allowed to certify these applications.

Unfortunately, this requirement has posed an obstacle to individuals in rural areas of our state where individuals have to travel longer distances to see their doctor. Extending this opportunity to physician assistants and nurse practitioners will make it easier for people with disabilities to get their DNR permits approved.

As you can see, this proposal has received bi-partisan support in both houses. The Assembly version passed committee with a unanimous vote and was passed by the full Assembly earlier this year. I hope you will join us in supporting individuals with disabilities through this improvement to our state's laws.



Committee on Sporting Heritage, Mining and Forestry
Required Credentials for Disabled Permit Verification
2015 Assembly Bill 112 & SB 88

Good morning Chairman Tiffany and committee members. My name is Chris Thielman, Operations Supervisor in the Bureau of Customer and Outreach Services of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Thank you for the opportunity to testify for informational purposes on Assembly Bill 112 and Senate Bill 88, which expands the list of health care providers authorized to verify a disabled permit applicant is physically disabled.

State law currently allows DNR to issue four types of disabled hunting permits and a permit which authorizes trolling with the aid of an electric trolling motor under statute 29.193. The statute references the signature of a "Licensed Physician" defined in Statute 448.02 (5) as "an individual possessing the degree of doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathy..." or licensed chiropractor or licensed podiatrist, depending upon the applicant's disability.

AB 112 and SB 88 expand the definition of licensed physician to include physician assistants and advanced practice nurse prescribers.

The department uses a single application form for all disabled permit types. State statutes require disabled hunting or trolling permit applicants to submit an application form including a written statement or report prepared and signed by an authorized health care professional verifying that the applicant is physically disabled no more than 6 months before the application.

Thank you for your time.

I hope you find this information helpful as you consider AB 112 and SB 88. I would be happy to try answering any questions you may have.



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Testimony of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation On SB 88 and AB 112

Chairman Tiffany, Members of the Senate Committee on Sporting Heritage, Mining and Forestry. My name is George Borchert and I am the President of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation. The Federation is comprised of over 190 hunting, fishing, trapping and forestry related organizations located throughout the State of Wisconsin.

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The Wildlife Federation supports both SB 88 and AB 112 that add licensed physician assistants and advanced practice nurse prescribers to the current list of medical professionals authorized to make determinations that individuals are disabled and therefor eligible for certain specialized opportunities, practices and permits under state law.

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In many areas in rural Wisconsin, local medical clinics are often only staffed on a daily basis by licensed physician assistants or advanced practice nurse prescribers. They are qualified to make disability determinations and thereby save the disabled hunter or angler a distant and costly trip to the next community with a licensed doctor. This is the case for both the first-time disability determination and subsequent renewals of that determination.

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The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation supports this common sense change in state law and thanks the authors for introducing this bill. Please pass this bill in the near future.

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Public hearing testimony for assembly bill 112

Offered by Dan Rossow

1. Thanks for inviting me to join in on this public hearing.
2. First let me say I'm a Disabled Vietnam Veteran that is rated 100% service connected disabled. I live in northern Wisconsin.
3. While applying for my Disabled hunters' permit I was notified that my Primary Care provider through the veterans' administration was not a sufficient signature for that permit, Per Wisconsin statute 29.193. Even with a letter from the Veterans Administration showing I am 100% service connected disabled along with the letter from my primary care provider it still was not acceptable.
4. In rural Wisconsin the smaller clinics do not have a MD. On site.
5. Adding Nurse Practitioner and Physicians Assistants to the list of authorized signatures today gives you the ability to help a great number of Veterans through the state.
6. On behalf of myself and all the Veterans I thank you for taking the time to hear me today.