



TYLER VORPAGEL

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 27TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Rep. Vorpapel Testimony on AB 247 – August 25, 2021

Since the pandemic hit our state last year, we've made numerous changes to our state statutes to give local governments, schools, businesses, and families increased flexibilities. The goal has always been to allow them to adapt more easily to the ways the pandemic changed our daily lives, work, and finances.

Senator Feyen, Representative Katsma, and I introduced AB 247 to continue providing flexibilities for those who live and work in our communities.

The bill, as amended, gives municipalities the ability to waive late interest & penalties for late property taxes in 2021 due to hardship. This can be done if a county or first class city passes a resolution authorizing the waiver and defining the criteria for determining hardship. It also allows the extension of existing covered approvals authorizing a construction project that are the subject of ongoing proceedings for an extra 36 months, with certain exceptions. To get an extension the approval holder would need to provide written notification to the governmental unit that issued the approval.

This is a common-sense bill that can have a positive impact on families, businesses, and communities across the state. When the coronavirus hit, we passed a COVID Relief Bill that made reforms to help our state deal with the pandemic and made sure \$2 billion was available in emergency federal aid. Likewise, AB 247 is a bipartisan bill that will help our state continue moving forward. It passed unanimously out of the Senate earlier this session.



DAN FEYEN

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To: The Assembly Committee on Housing and Real Estate
From: Sen. Dan Feyen
Re: Assembly Bill 247

Hello members of the committee, thank you for taking the time to hear testimony on this important legislation.

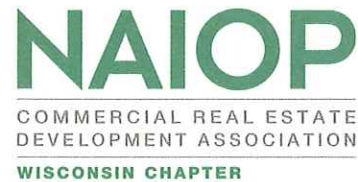
As we all know, the COVID-19 pandemic has slowed down many of our court systems, inspections, and local government processes; forcing many Wisconsinites into tight financial circumstances. This legislation aims to allow flexibility for families and consumers to compensate for these conditions and will help move Wisconsin forward through the recovery process.

One way we can keep our economy moving is to make sure we are not sending new construction back to square one in the permitting process. This bill allows for a 36 month extension to unexpired construction project permits and survey maps that are currently being challenged. Under previous law, if the challenge failed to come to a conclusion prior to the deadline, a project would be sent back to the beginning to start the process over. The permit holder would need to submit their extension at least 90 days before their permit is set to expire and would still have to adhere to the laws, regulations, ordinances, rules, or other requirements that were in effect at the time the approval was issued. This will allow for additional time and flexibility to make sure projects stay on track and moving forward.

Just like 2020 Act 185, last year's COVID-19 relief bill, this bill once again gives municipalities the ability to waive penalties and interest on late installments of property taxes payable in 2021. Municipalities would be able to get rid of these additional fines if a person's tax bill is paid in full by October 1st for this year. People are already in dire straits financially and can use any flexibility they can get in managing their money.

Lastly, the bill removes the timely payment requirement on property owners who wish to file a claim to recover the unlawful imposition of property taxes, a claim for the excessive assessment of property taxes, or a claim to recover property taxes paid in protest due to an outstanding contested assessment.

Wisconsinites were hit hard last year and are looking to their government to help them recover. This bill provides flexibility and extended time frames which will help both businesses and families get on their way back to normal. I want to thank everyone again for your time today and with that I am happy to answer any questions.



TO: Members, Assembly Housing and Real Estate Committee

FROM: Tom Larson, Executive Vice President of the Wisconsin REALTORS® Association and Lobbyist for NAIOP-Wisconsin

DATE: August 25, 2021

RE: AB 247/SB 254 – Extension of economic development permits

The Wisconsin REALTORS® Association and the NAIOP-WI strongly support AB 247/SB 254 relating to the 36-month extension of permit deadlines related to economic development projects.

Background -- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, numerous previously-approved economic development projects have experienced significant delays to a variety of factors, including mandatory closures of government agencies, factories producing necessary building materials, and worker exposure to the virus. As a result, many of the permits and approvals (building permits, environmental permits, etc.) have expired or will soon expire before the permit deadlines.

Unless the deadlines are extended, many of these economic development projects will have to go back through the permit-approval process which will cause significant delays (months or even years) and additional costs (financing, appraisals, carry costs, project labor agreements, etc.) to these projects. Depending upon the nature of these additional delays and costs, some of these projects may no longer be feasible, resulting in loss economic development opportunity, jobs, and tax base.

Benefits of legislation -- AB 247/SB 254 makes these permit extensions automatic and uniform to create greater consistency and predictability with regard to how these permit extensions will be administered by the numerous state and local governments responsible for the permit extensions. Moreover, AB 247/SB 254 will reduce the need to commit additional government resources (human and financial) to the extension of permits that were previously approved.

Finally, by passing AB 247/SB 254, Wisconsin would join numerous other states (Florida, California, Connecticut, New Jersey, etc.) who have extended economic development permits due to delays resulting from COVID-19.

For further information please contact Tom Larson (tlarson@wra.org) at (608) 241-2047.