



Amy Loudenbeck

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S 31ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Testimony before the Assembly Committee on State Affairs Assembly Bill 277 Rep. Amy Loudenbeck

Good morning, Mr. Chair and members, thank you for having this hearing today on Assembly Bill 277 relating to the sales of alcohol beverages at the state fair park.

Assembly Bill 277 was originally introduced last session in response to an issue regarding the process State Fair Park (SFP) has historically used to allow SFP approved vendors to sell alcohol beverages on SFP grounds. In order to resolve this issue, 2019 Assembly Bill 869 was introduced late last session. That bill passed the Assembly, but was not taken up by the Senate due to COVID-19.

AB 277 is limited to alcohol beverage sales at State Fair Park only. Specifically, with the substitute amendment, it allows SFP to issue permits to vendors to sell alcoholic beverages, similar to how the Department of Revenue issues permits to airports. Vendors do not need a separate municipal license, but must have a vendor contract and receive a permit from the State Fair Park Board. In addition, they must follow the rules and regulations in Chapter 125 with a few exceptions. AB 277 also creates an exemption to allow the Wisconsin Winery Association to sell bottles of wine without a separate municipal license. The provisions in AB 277 would align Wisconsin Statutes with current and historic procedures for vendor alcohol sales at SFP.

The State Fair Park Board has policies that have been in place for years to ensure all of the vendors are following the law. Legislative Council has been provided with background information and documents and others from State Fair Park will be also be testifying today.

Thank you for your consideration of this important bill.



Alberta Darling
Wisconsin State Senator • District 8

Testimony before the Assembly Committee on State Affairs
Assembly Bill 277: Sale of Alcohol Beverages at the State Fair Park
May 5, 2021

Thank you Chairman Swearingen and committee members for hearing testimony today on Assembly Bill 277.

Last session an issue was brought to the legislature's attention regarding the process State Fair Park has used to allow approved vendors to sell alcohol beverages on the grounds of State Fair Park. A bill to address the issue passed the Assembly but was not taken up by the Senate due to COVID-19. As introduced Assembly Bill 277 reflected last session's legislation. Assembly Substitute Amendment 1 reflects a compromise reached by the many stakeholders involved in the State Fair Park and Chapter 125. As amended, Assembly Bill 277 creates a permitting process for the State Fair Park to issue vendor permits for the sale of alcohol.

Assembly Bill 277 allows the State Fair Park Board to issue permits for the sale of alcohol on state fair park grounds. In doing so, this bill ensures that vendors are part of the Chapter 125 process, while still allowing State Fair Park the flexibility they need to successfully operate.

It is important to note under the bill a person must satisfy all of the eligibility criteria that any applicant must satisfy in order to obtain an alcohol beverages license or permit, except for the criteria related to residency. A person is not required under the bill to have been a resident of the state for at least 90 days prior to the date of application to make sales at the State Fair Park.

The State Fair is a wonderful once a year event, and our goal is to get this bill done before the fair season this summer. Thank you for taking the time to hear Assembly Bill 277. I hope to have your support.