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# PAUL TITTL

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 25<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Assembly Committee on State Affairs

Assembly Bill 1019

February 14, 2024

First of all, I would like to thank you, Chairman Swearingen and committee members, for allowing me to testify before you today concerning Assembly Bill 1019 relating to authorizing physical therapists to make certifications for acquiring disabled parking plates and cards.

Handicapped parking spaces serve a very important need, and many people rely on them in order to continue to be able to shop or attend a class.

Those tags are available for free to those with an eligible permanent disability.

Under current law several medical providers are able to certify that a person qualifies for disabled parking. They include: physicians, podiatrists, advanced practice nurses, chiropractors, public health nurses or physician assistants who are licensed or certified, or Christian Science Practitioners residing in Wisconsin. Registered nurses may also provide certification if they have additional credentials.

Adding physical therapists to the list of qualified certifiers makes sense, because physical therapists have the training to be able to make these kinds of determinations. Therefore, if patients are working with a physical therapist, they do not have to go to another medical professional in order to apply for a disabled parking tag.

It makes far more sense to extend the law to give certification privileges to physical therapists. This bill makes that change, and I urge you to support it.

Finally, the amendment merely gives the department a nine month period of time to implement the change. That change came at the request of the Department of Transportation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to address any questions you might have.

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**JOAN BALLWEG**

STATE SENATOR · 14<sup>TH</sup> SENATE DISTRICT

Assembly Bill 1019: Authorizing physical therapists to make certifications  
for acquiring disabled parking plates and cards  
Testimony of State Senator Joan Ballweg  
Assembly Committee on State Affairs  
February 14, 2024

Thank you, Chair Swearingen, and members of the committee for holding this public hearing.

Assembly Bill 1019 is a straightforward bill that would authorize physical therapists to certify the necessary Department of Transportation information for a person to acquire a disabled parking license plate or card.

The current list of providers authorized to do this include: licensed physician, advanced practice nurse, public health nurse, physician assistant, podiatrist, chiropractor, Christian Science practitioner, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

According to Mayo Clinic, physical therapists diagnose and treat patients who have medical problems or injuries that limit their abilities to move or function in their daily lives. Given the scope of their practice, level of expertise and training, we believe physical therapists are more than capable and qualified to be added to the list of providers who can authorize disabled parking license plates and cards for individuals. When someone is injured or disabled, whether permanently or temporarily, they will often work very closely with a physical therapist. This bill provides one more option for those needing disabled license parking plates and cards to receive them from a provider-type with whom they are often already closely working.

At least six other states allow physical therapists to issue such certifications, including neighboring states Michigan and Minnesota. This legislation is supported by the American Physical Therapy Association – Wisconsin.

This legislation includes an amendment we introduced at the request of the Department of Transportation to delay implementation by nine months. This would give the department time to make the necessary IT updates to accommodate the bill.

Thank you for your consideration, and I am happy to answer any questions.