

# DEAN R. KAUFERT

---

WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE

## **AB 302 Funeral Procession Purple Light Bill**

Testimony of Representative Dean Kaufert

Assembly Committee on Transportation

July 22, 2025 • 417 North, State Capitol

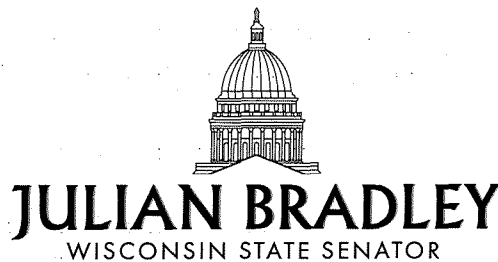
Thank you Chairwoman VanderMeer and committee members for holding a public hearing and allowing me to testify in support of AB 302. This is a relatively simple bill that will expand options for funeral directors by allowing them to use a flashing purple light to designate a funeral procession.

Under current law, the lead vehicle in a funeral procession can be equipped with a flashing amber light to be used during the procession. This bill adds an additional option and authorizes the use of a flashing purple light. The change has been requested by many Wisconsin funeral directors.

Allowing the use of purple lights would provide a distinct and universally recognizable signal to alert other drivers of a funeral procession and to yield appropriately, reducing the risk of accidents or other disruptions of the procession. Flashing amber lights are used by a wide variety of other emergency and utility vehicles, making their meaning less clear to discern for a driver when they see them. Purple lights, on the other hand, are not used to designate any other vehicle type, and would therefore better distinguish funeral processions.

The color purple was chosen because it is viewed as a symbol of mourning, and therefore already culturally associated with funerals. Allowing the purple light option would align Wisconsin with at least a dozen other states, including neighboring Illinois, that have implemented this measure to distinguish funeral processions from other vehicles on the road. This would particularly help funeral homes near the state border that operate in both states.

Our bill does not take away the current amber light option for funeral directors, or mandate that they switch to purple lighting. It simply adds purple as an additional choice for them to utilize. I ask for your support of this bill and am happy to answer any questions of the committee.



**Assembly Bill 302**  
**Assembly Committee on Transportation**  
*July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025*

Chairperson VanderMeer and members of the committee – thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony today.

I'm writing in support of Assembly Bill 302 (AB 302), a straightforward, bipartisan bill that will help make our roads safer while showing respect for those we've lost.

We're all familiar with the colors used on the road:

- Red and blue flashing lights mean police.
- Red and white lights usually mean an ambulance or fire truck.
- Amber lights often mean a construction or service vehicle.

AB 302 proposes we add one more color – purple – specifically for funeral processions.

Right now, Wisconsin law allows funeral processions to proceed through intersections once the lead vehicle has entered. But identifying those processions is often confusing. They might have their headlights on, or maybe flashing amber lights—but that's easy to miss or misinterpret.

Flashing purple lights, on the other hand, would give drivers a clear, unmistakable sign: this is a funeral procession – slow down, show respect, and drive safely.

There are two good reasons to make this change:

First, the color purple already symbolizes mourning in many cultures. It's fitting, dignified, and immediately associated with loss.

Second, purple isn't used for any other emergency or roadside vehicle. That means it stands out without creating confusion.

At least a dozen other states already allow purple lights for funeral processions. It's time Wisconsin joins them. Not only would this small change promote public safety, but it would also help preserve the dignity of one of life's most solemn moments.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and support.



**To:** Assembly Committee on Transportation  
**From:** Senator Mark Spreitzer  
**RE:** Assembly Bill 302  
**Date:** July 22, 2025

Chair VanderMeer and committee members:

Thank you for hearing Assembly Bill 302, and for the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of this bill. This bill will authorize the use of flashing purple lights for funeral procession vehicles, and I am proud to have worked with my bipartisan co-authors to draft AB 302.

Funeral processions have long been a way for families and friends to honor and escort a loved one to their final resting place. During a funeral procession, flashing lights are commonly used as a visual signal to other drivers to indicate that the vehicles are part of a unified group and distinguishable from regular traffic patterns and events.

Currently, Wisconsin law permits funeral processions to proceed through intersections once the lead vehicle has entered, but the identification of these processions relies primarily on lighted headlights or flashing amber lights, whose meaning can be ambiguous or can be misconstrued by other drivers. Introducing flashing purple lights as an option for funeral processions would provide a distinct and universally recognizable signal, alerting drivers to yield appropriately and reducing the risk of accidents and reckless driving.

The color purple is commonly utilized during somber and dignified occasions such as funerals and memorial services across the world, with the color viewed as a symbol of mourning in many cultures. From decorations to even the color of flags often placed on cars in a funeral procession, purple is a symbolic and recognizable color within the funeral and mourning process. Through adding this to the authorized colors of flashing lights that can be used by funeral procession vehicles, this adds another layer of identification and recognition for the vehicle procession and the mourning process. If this bill were to be enacted, Wisconsin would join at least a dozen other states that use purple lights to distinguish funeral procession vehicles from other vehicles on the road.

AB 302 is a strong, bipartisan bill that is supported by funeral directors and Chiefs of Police across Wisconsin. Not only would this bill honor the solemn nature of a funeral procession through the usage of the purple shade, it would also promote road safety by providing distinct visual cues to all road users across the state.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today, and I am happy to take any questions.

Sincerely,

Mark Spreitzer  
State Senator  
15<sup>th</sup> Senate District

**15<sup>th</sup> SENATE DISTRICT**

---

608-266-2253 | [Sen.Spreitzer@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Sen.Spreitzer@legis.wisconsin.gov) | [www.SenSpreitzer.com](http://www.SenSpreitzer.com)

 [Facebook.com/SenSpreitzer](https://www.facebook.com/SenSpreitzer)

 Printed with union labor on recycled paper



To: Assembly Committee on Transportation

From: Joel Walters, President of the Wisconsin Funeral Directors Association

Date: July 22, 2025

Re: Testimony in support of Assembly Bill 302 related to the use of purple lights in funeral processions

---

Good morning, Chairwoman VanderMeer and other members of the Assembly Committee on Transportation. I am Joel Walters, funeral director and owner of Muehl-Boettcher Funeral Home in Seymour, Wisconsin. I also currently serve as the President of the Wisconsin Funeral Directors Association.

The Wisconsin Funeral Director's Association supports Assembly Bill 302 for a few reasons.

1. Under current law today, funeral processions may only use amber lights in funeral processions. As you have likely noticed on the roadways, many other work vehicles, whether they are municipal, utility, agriculture, or other workers, are now using amber lights to notify other drivers of their presence and the need to slow down. As a result, it is more difficult to differentiate the beginning of a funeral procession.
2. Traffic flow necessarily and ceremoniously changes when a funeral procession is enroute to a burial. As a community, we all recognize and respect this tradition. The need to stand out on the roads is vital.
3. The color purple is internally recognized as the color of grief. We would like to allow the use of purple, as other states are also doing, to better set funeral processions apart from other vehicles on the roadway.
4. We have numerous funeral directors who work and live near the border and provide funeral services in multiple states. Some of these states already use purple lights in their funeral processions. The ability to have one set of lights would be more efficient for those directors. Two of my WFDA colleagues are here today to talk more about those specifics.

In the past, law enforcement has had concerns about this legislation, however we have reached out to all known law enforcement groups in the state and have been told they are neutral on this legislation. In fact, the Police Chiefs, have now registered in favor of this legislation.

We anticipate no opposition to this effort and ask that you support Assembly Bill 302.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.



July 22, 2025

Representative Nancy VanderMeer  
Chair, Assembly Committee on Transportation  
Wisconsin State Capitol  
2 E. Main St.  
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Representative VanderMeer,

On behalf of the Funeral Service & Cremation Alliance of Wisconsin (FSCA), I would like to register our support of AB 302, which would authorize the use of flashing purple lights during a funeral procession. The FSCA is a statewide trade association representing funeral directors and funeral homes throughout Wisconsin.

Currently, the state of Wisconsin allows the use of amber flashing lights during a funeral procession. Many funeral homes border different states that already allow for purple flashing lights, and this law would allow them to use those lights here in the state of Wisconsin. Also, the color purple is often associated with death and bereavement and would differentiate between other colored lights that can mean many different things.

This change would not only honor the funeral process, but would provide a clearer designation to the public when the funeral procession is underway.

Thank you for your consideration in support of AB 302.

Best,

Erin Longmire  
FSCA Executive Director