



SHAE SORTWELL

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 2nd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Hearing Testimony
Assembly Committee on Local Government
March 19, 2025
Assembly Bill 42

Chairman Novak and members of the Assembly Committee on Local Government – Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on AB 42, relating to the local regulation of fowl.

Individuals growing or raising their own food on their property is becoming more popular, regardless of their location, due to inflation, supply chain issues, and government food controls on farmland. Protecting this basic human right is essential. Government should encourage and protect, not limit, the right to raise your own food on your private property.

Several bigger municipalities already allow this practice, including Milwaukee, Green Bay, Kenosha, Racine, and Appleton. In fact, Madison doubled its cap to eight chickens within the last couple of years. Unfortunately, we have heard from constituents in other parts of Wisconsin that are not allowed this freedom.

To ensure the right to raise fowl on property is protected for all Wisconsinites, AB 42 is similar to Madison's chicken ordinances. Unless a cap is raised higher by a municipality, Wisconsinites would be able to keep up to four fowl on their residential property. Municipalities still have the flexibility to prohibit roosters, to require a permit or a notification of adjoining land owners, or to impose reasonable regulations on fowl housing and cleanliness standards.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify on this legislation and would gladly answer any questions the committee may have.



RACHAEL A. CABRAL-GUEVARA

STATE SENATOR • 19TH SENATE DISTRICT

Testimony before the Assembly Committee on Local Government

Senator Rachael Cabral-Guevara

March 19, 2025

Hello, members of the Assembly Committee on Local Government. Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony on Assembly Bill 42, a proposal that ends unnecessary restrictions on property owners' keeping of up to four chickens or quail (fowl).

Due to inflation, allowing individuals to grow their own food on their property is becoming increasingly popular, regardless of where folks live. Instead of limiting the right to grow food on private property, the government should encourage and protect this practice.

Several bigger municipalities already allow this practice, including Madison, where the cap on chickens able to be held was doubled from four to eight. Unfortunately, this same freedom to keep chickens or fowl is not extended to all Wisconsinites.

Under the bill, Wisconsinites would be able to keep up to four fowl on their residential property unless a municipality raises the limit. Importantly, this proposal does not take away all local control. Local governments may place reasonable standards on housing, notifications for neighbors, and noisier roosters.

I am hopeful you will support this simple step in the right direction by allowing Wisconsinites to raise their own food on their private property. Thank you for your time.