



RACHAEL A. CABRAL-GUEVARA

STATE SENATOR • 19TH SENATE DISTRICT

Testimony before the Assembly Committee on Health, Aging, and Long-Term Care

Senator Rachael Cabral-Guevara

April 23, 2025

Hello, members of the Assembly Committee on Health, Aging, and Long-Term Care. Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony on Assembly Bill 44, a simple proposal that will help speed up the process for pronouncing death.

I'll keep this testimony brief. Pronouncing the date, time, and place of death is an important first step in the death records process that currently can only be performed by physicians, physician assistants, hospice nurses, and a few other providers.

At least thirty-seven states allow nurses to pronounce death, and forty (including Washington, D.C.) allow nurse practitioners to sign death certificates under varying supervision. In Wisconsin, while hospice nurses can make pronouncements, advanced practice nurse prescribers (APNPs) involved with the patient's care cannot.

Allowing APNPs to make pronouncements will not only help hospitals and long-term care facilities start the death records process more efficiently, but it will also cut down delays for families and loved ones seeking closure. That is why it gained the support of the Funeral and Cremation Alliance, the Wisconsin Health Care Association, and the Wisconsin Hospital Association.

I am hopeful you will support this simple step in the right direction to help improve the efficiency of our death records system. Thank you for your time.



ROB SUMMERFIELD

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 68th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT
MAJORITY CAUCUS CHAIR

April 23, 2025

Representative Clint Moses, Chair

Members of the Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care

Testimony on Assembly Bill 44

Chair Moses and Committee Members:

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to testify at today's public hearing on Assembly Bill 44. I appreciate your time and consideration of this legislation.

We are here today to improve Wisconsin's death records process by allowing advanced practice nurse prescribers (APNPs) to make death pronouncements. Currently, Wisconsin is one of just 13 states that do not grant this authority. At the same time, we do grant death pronouncement authority to hospice nurses and physician assistants. This bill corrects that inconsistency and brings us in line with the rest of the nation.

This is a common-sense update to our laws that will reduce delays and administrative burdens on healthcare providers. Hospitals, nursing homes, and long-term care facilities will benefit from a more efficient and consistent death records process. Most importantly, this change will help prevent lengthy waiting periods for grieving families as they make arrangements for their loved ones.

I ask that you join me in supporting this bill.



ADVOCATE. ADVANCE. LEAD.

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TO: Members of the Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care

FROM: Ann Zenk, Senior Vice President – Workforce and Clinical Practice
Kyle O'Brien, Senior Vice President – Government Relations

DATE: April 23, 2025

Subject: WHA Supports Assembly Bill 44 – Legislation recognizing advanced practice registered nurse practice in Wisconsin's death record preparation law

WHA is pleased to support Assembly Bill 44, an update to Wisconsin's death records statute to recognize the ability of advanced practice nurse prescribers to utilize their existing licensed scope of practice to pronounce the date, time, and place of death for purposes of preparation of the death record.

Patients throughout Wisconsin now rely on advanced practice nurse prescribers (APNPs) as primary and specialty care providers that work within care teams in diverse health care settings, including hospitals and clinics. Over the years, as the education and training of APNPs has evolved, so too has the practice of APNPs in hospital and other care delivery settings.

However, in some cases, Wisconsin law has not similarly evolved, creating an unnecessary regulatory bottleneck on Wisconsin's health care workforce, particularly in rural and other areas of the state that heavily rely on care teams that include APNPs to provide care in their communities. To address such barriers, WHA over the past decade has worked to advance bipartisan legislation to update Wisconsin's advanced directives statutes to recognize the ability of APNPs to make medical determinations under those statutes (2019 Act 90), provide clarification in Wisconsin's Medicaid statute affirming that orders made by APNPs have the same validity as orders made by physicians (2017 Act 119), and align state hospital regulations with federal regulations to remove barriers to APNPs providing hospital services (2013 Act 236).

As demonstrated in WHA's 2025 Wisconsin Health Care Workforce Report, Wisconsin's hospitals remain challenged by a factor that is mostly immovable: the state's changing demographics that are shrinking the available workforce and at the same time increasing health care demand. The report emphasizes that reducing unnecessary burdens and inefficiencies to help maximize the existing health care workforce's capacity is critical to address that challenge.

Assembly Bill 44 removes one such outdated regulatory bottleneck on Wisconsin's health care workforce that will enable hospitals to utilize a more efficient death records process that allows all members of the care team to best utilize their training and skills.

If you have any questions, contact Kyle O'Brien, Senior Vice President Government Relations, at kobrien@wha.org or (608) 274-1820.

WHCA / WiCAL

Wisconsin Health Care Association

Wisconsin Center for Assisted Living

TO: Assembly Committee on Health
FROM: Eric Koch, WHCA/WiCAL VP of Government Relations & Regulatory Affairs
DATE: April 23, 2025
RE: Support Assembly Bill 44 – Allowing advanced practice nurse prescribers to pronounce the date, time and place of a patient's death for purposes of the preparation of death records.

Chairman Moses and Committee Members,

Thank you for your time this morning and for providing me with the opportunity to testify in support of Assembly Bill 44.

My name is Eric Koch, I am the Vice President of Government Relations and Regulatory Affairs with the Wisconsin Health Care Association and Wisconsin Center for Assisted Living (WHCA/WiCAL), which represents nearly 500 nursing homes and assisted living facilities across the State of Wisconsin.

AB 44 is a straightforward bill allowing Advanced Practice Nurse Prescribers to declare the date, time, and place of a patient's death for the preparation of death records, which will have a positive impact on long-term care providers and their residents.

Many patients rely on APNPs for their primary care, and it makes sense that the clinician who is directly involved with the care of the patient to be able to pronounce the date, time, and place of the patient's death.

AB 44 represents an important update to state statute which honor the patient both in life and in death by ensuring that a death pronouncement occurs expeditiously by the clinician directly involved with the patient's care.

Thank you again for your time and consideration this morning of AB 44.

Eric Koch

Vice President, Government Relations and Regulatory Affairs

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April 23, 2025

Representative Clint Moses
Chair, Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care
PO Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Chairman Moses,

On behalf of the Funeral Service & Cremation Alliance of Wisconsin (FSCA), I would like to voice our support of Assembly Bill 44, which would allow advanced practice nurses the ability to pronounce a patient's death for the purpose of preparing death records.

The FSCA is a professional trade association representing funeral directors and funeral homes located throughout Wisconsin. Our members rely on the timely and accurate filing of death certificates to assist our families in the funeral process. Death certificates are needed to obtain a cremation permit, receive any insurance dollars on behalf of beneficiaries and close any bank accounts that may be needed in the planning of the funeral. Expanding the circle of who can pronounce a patient's death to further expedite the processing of death records only helps streamline this process.

Our profession is the last link in the health care chain. AB 44 offers a sensible solution to aid in the effectiveness in preparing death records, which enables funeral directors the ability to serve our families more efficiently and professionally.

Thank you for your time in consideration in support of AB 44. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Erin Longmire
FSCA Executive Director