



# PATRICK TESTIN

## STATE SENATOR

DATE: March 12, 2025

RE: **Testimony on Assembly Bill 68**

TO: The Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-term Care

FROM: Senator Patrick Testin

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Thank you Chairman Moses and members of the committee for accepting my testimony on Assembly Bill 68.

The Electronic Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (ePDMP) is a tool to help combat the ongoing prescription drug abuse epidemic in Wisconsin. It aids healthcare professionals in their prescribing and dispensing decisions by providing valuable information about controlled substance prescriptions that are dispensed in the state. The ePDMP also fosters the ability of pharmacies, healthcare professionals, law enforcement agencies, and public health officials to work together to reduce the misuse, abuse, and diversion of prescribed controlled substance medications. The ePDMP is one of the most important prevention tools we have in our fight against the opioid epidemic, giving healthcare providers more information as they work with patients to prescribe and dispense medications.

The database has proven to be essential with registrations having increased ten-fold between 2019 and 2024. Healthcare providers have been instrumental in the successes seen in Wisconsin, but there is still more work to do.

Senate Bill 68 extends the sunsets for the ePDMP. The first sunset provision requires an ePDMP review before a prescriber issues a prescription for a patient. This sunsets on April 1, 2025. The second sunset provision requires the Controlled Substances Board to conduct quarterly reviews of the ePDMP. This requirement sunsets on October 30, 2025. This bill extends the sunsets by five years to April 1, 2030, and October 30, 2030, for each respective provision.

Thank you again for listening to my testimony and I hope that you will join me in supporting this bill.

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# BARBARA DITTRICH

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 99<sup>th</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

## Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care Testimony on Assembly Bill 68 March 12, 2025

Thank you Committee Chair Moses and fellow members of the Assembly Health, Aging and Long-Term Care for hearing Assembly Bill 68. This legislation is one way we can work together to identify and halt prescription drug abuse in our state.

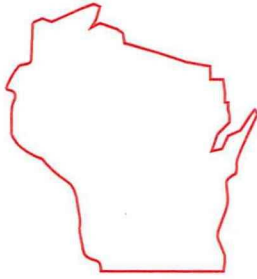
Wisconsin's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) is a tool used by healthcare professionals, pharmacists, law enforcement agencies, and health officials to combat the ongoing prescription drug abuse problem. It provides these organizations valuable data to make informed decisions when it comes to providing care when using prescription drugs.

Healthcare professionals report on how many prescriptions are dispensed throughout the state, while law enforcement officials submit data on when they believe an individual violates the Controlled Substance Act, has experienced an overdose, or had their prescriptions stolen.

In the last quarterly report for the PDMP in 2024, it was noted that there was a 9.2% reduction in the dispensing of opioids in since the same quarter in 2023. Law enforcement reporting to the PDMP shows there were 29 violations of the Controlled Substances Act, six suspected narcotic-related deaths, 20 non-fatal opioid related overdoses, and 18 reports of stolen prescriptions in 2024 in Waukesha County alone. These are all decreases from the 2023 numbers for Waukesha County. This is also better than some other counties in the state, but all drug abuse is concerning.

While there is still progress to be made, it's good to see how far the state has come in addressing drug abuse since the PDMP went into effect in 2013. Should this legislation expire before April 1<sup>st</sup>, the PDMP will no longer be required to review a patient's record and their controlled substance usage before a prescription is ordered. We will lose this valuable tool that is critical to the advances we have obtained. There is also a sunset date of October 30<sup>th</sup> for the Controlled Substance Board to review the results of the PDMP and create a report of it. None of us want to see Wisconsin backslide. Without the PDMP, our healthcare professionals, law enforcement, and health officials won't be able to accurately assess prescription drug usage in Wisconsin.

Thank you for considering my testimony. I welcome any questions you may have.



From the Desk of

# John Nygren

**Testimony on Assembly Bill 68**

**March 12, 2025**

Chair Moses and members of the Assembly Committee on Health, Aging, and Long-term Care:

As many of you know, I served in the Assembly for nearly 14 years, including as co-chair of the Joint Committee on Finance for four sessions. One of my proudest accomplishments during my time in the Legislature was the passage of the HOPE Agenda, a package of bills passed over two sessions to fight heroin and opiate addiction in Wisconsin.

One of the bills that was passed as part of the HOPE Agenda modernized Wisconsin's prescription drug monitoring program (PDMP), ensuring nearly real-time tracking of opioid prescriptions to discourage "doctor shopping," and ultimately reducing the number of Wisconsinites who become addicted to prescription opiates.

The original bill that was passed as part of the HOPE Agenda included a 3-year sunset clause on the PDMP, which was later extended through this year. I sincerely thank Senator Testin and Representative Dittrich for continuing the important work of combatting the opioid epidemic in Wisconsin, and wholeheartedly support this bill, which extends the sunset provision for another 5 years. The PDMP has been fully integrated into the prescribing work-flow, and is a valuable tool for doctors to efficiently and effectively manage opioid prescriptions to make sure patients have the care they need while deterring opioid misuse and abuse.

I would also urge the bill authors and members of this committee to consider permanently authorizing this bill, and repealing the sunset provision altogether - this change to state law has worked to reduce opioid addiction and deaths in our state, and permanently enshrining this provision would serve to curtail the misuse and abuse of these drugs for generations of Wisconsinites to come.

Thank you for your time, and please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions.

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