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# CORY TOMCZYK

STATE SENATOR • 29<sup>TH</sup> SENATE DISTRICT

## Senate Bill 155

Senate Committee on Transportation & Local Government

May 27, 2025

Currently, there are no laws that require any inspection of parking structures during their lifespan. Under the Commercial Building Code, they must be inspected once after construction and once if alterations are made. That is all and I believe it is not enough.

Parking structures in Wisconsin endure a lot of abuse. Not only by vehicles, but by snow, ice, and the worst thing for them – salt. Road salt eats away at and weakens concrete. Unfortunately during Wisconsin's harsh winters, these mostly concrete structures are exposed to a large amount of salt, thus causing them to age quicker.

We all remember the parking structure collapse that happened at Bayshore Mall in 2023, destroying vehicles and trapping dozens more for months. In 2010, tragically a young man was killed in Milwaukee when a panel from a parking structure fell and struck him. Thankfully, these incidents do not happen often. However, lives can be saved and safety can be ensured if parking structures begin regular inspections.

SB 155 requires that parking structures be inspected every five years. The owner of the structure would then have to submit the report to DSPS. Owners would be given a grace period to have their structure inspected and would face fines if the structure is not inspected in 12 months. If it is still not inspected, the structure would then be closed until it is inspected.

There have been some concerns by stakeholders who have asked who or what entity would be allowed to do the inspections. We have also been asked, if the structure were to be deemed unsafe, what the next steps would be to remedy the issues. Would the structure be closed until they are fixed? And what issues within a structure would rise to the level of closing a structure? These are valid questions and we will be working to fix them in an amendment to the bill soon.



# DAVE MAXEY

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 83<sup>RD</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

## Testimony on Senate Bill 155

Senate Committee on Transportation and Local Government

May 27, 2025

Thank you, Chairman Tomczyk and committee members, for hearing my testimony on Senate Bill 155.

When a three-story parking garage at the Bayshore Mall partially collapsed, it could have been a tragedy. The collapse happened during the lunch rush. Two vehicles were crushed, and more than 50 others were stranded inside. Thankfully, no one was hurt. But that incident raised a basic question: why don't we require regular inspections of parking garages in Wisconsin?

The answer is simple—our current laws don't require them. Once a garage is built and passes its initial inspection, there's no requirement to check its structural safety again unless someone files a complaint or it's altered. That means a parking structure can go decades without any formal review.

This bill fixes that oversight. It requires parking garage owners to have their structures inspected every five years by a professional engineer. Inspection reports would be submitted to DSPS, or to the appropriate local authority. If an owner doesn't follow through, there's a six-month grace period. After that, they face fines. If no inspection happens within a year of the deadline, the structure would be closed until it's brought into compliance.

We already inspect our bridges every two to four years because we know how important routine maintenance and oversight are to public safety. This bill brings that same level of responsibility to parking garages, which hold hundreds of vehicles and thousands of people every day.

I appreciate working with Senator Tomczyk, Senator Wanggaard, and Representative Donovan to get this done this session, and I'm hopeful we can move it forward.

This bill is a reasonable, preventive step to keep people safe. I respectfully ask for your support, and I'm happy to answer any questions.