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Chairman Ripp and committee members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today as the author of Assembly Bill 28. I have re-introduced this bill at the request of law enforcement officers and in consultation with the City of Green Bay traffic engineer in order to clarify drivers' obligations at nonfunctioning traffic control signals, similar to both recent and longstanding laws enacted in several other states that are recognized as a best practice. Specifically, traffic signals that are malfunctioning or have power outages would be treated as a 4 way stop by law unless other direction is provided by a traffic control officer.

This proposal is essentially identical to current law in several Midwestern states such as Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio as well as larger states like Pennsylvania, Florida, California and New York, among at least 17 states I am aware of which already have such a statute in place. Transportation departments in those states have used both traditional and social media efforts, PSAs, and inclusion in state drivers manuals and DOT written exams to educate the public to exercise extreme caution during power outages because police can't possibly direct traffic at all intersections. I have had officers recount numerous vehicles traveling through malfunctioning intersections at high rates of speed, and they believe strongly that this legislation will prevent future traffic fatalities.

From a practical standpoint, enactment of this legislation would provide legal clarity and assist law enforcement during incidents of widespread outages by allowing them to focus their emergency response and officer-involved traffic control efforts on the highest traffic intersections. This legislation is supported by the Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association.

As many of you are aware, identical legislation last session (2013 AB 577) passed this committee with strong bi-partisan support, passed the Assembly on a voice vote and was recommended unanimously (5-0) by the Senate Transportation and Public Safety Committee but did not receive a floor vote in the Senate.

Thank you for your time, and I am happy to address any questions you may have.