



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

KATHY BERNIER

August 18, 2015

To: Assembly Committee on Health

From: Rep. Kathy Bernier

Re: Assembly Bill 242 (Modifying administrative rules related to maintenance and use standards for oxygen equipment in nursing homes)

Dear Chairman Sanfelippo and Committee Members,

Thank you scheduling Assembly Bill 242 for today's public hearing. AB 242 bill makes a simple but effective change to existing administrative code through the Department of Health Services with regard to oxygen equipment maintenance in nursing homes.

Current law requires nursing home staff to replace oxygen tubing every five days despite manufacture's replacement recommendations providing for a much longer lifespan on such equipment. Assembly Bill 242 simply modifies the Department of Health Services' (DHS) administrative code to require oxygen equipment be maintained and used in accordance with current standards of practice and manufacturers' recommendations.

Assembly Bill 242, without opposition and with support from aging and long term care groups including Leading Age, the Wisconsin Health Care Association and the State of Wisconsin Board on Aging and Long Term Care, identifies an outdated administrative code and provides a straightforward and commonsense solution that will save precious staff time and resources in nursing homes. Further, AB 242 will ensure that standards of maintenance are preserved over time should maintenance requirements change as advances in technology and manufacturing are realized.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration of Assembly Bill 242 today. I urge your support and welcome further conversation on this topic in the future.

(608) 266-9172
Toll-Free: (888) 534-0068
Fax: (608) 282-3668
Home: (715) 720-0326

P.O. Box 8952 • Madison, WI 53708-8952
Rep.Bernier@legis.wi.gov



STATE OF WISCONSIN
BOARD ON AGING AND LONG TERM CARE

1402 Pankratz Street, Suite 111
Madison, WI 53704-4001
(608) 246-7013
Ombudsman Program (800) 815-0015
Medigap Helpline (800) 242-1060
Part D Helpline (855) 677-2783
Fax (608) 246-7001
<http://longtermcare.wi.gov>

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13 Aug 2015

Rep. Kathy Bernier
314 N State Capitol
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Rep. Bernier,

The Board on Aging and Long Term Care wishes to express the support of the agency for AB-242.

The role of the Board on Aging and Long Term Care and, in particular, that of the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, has always been focused on assuring safe and effective care provided to consumers of long term care in accordance with choices made by those consumers and with attention being paid to respect for their human and civil rights.

After discussion with the agency staff, the members of the Board are in agreement with the bill's authors that this proposal appears to present no risk of a deleterious effect on resident health and safety. The bill may, in fact, stimulate even closer attention being paid to the condition and cleanliness of equipment used to provide Oxygen and other respiratory therapy modalities to residents of Long Term Care facilities.

We thank the authors for offering this bill and we thank you for bringing it to a timely hearing.

If you have any questions of the Board on Aging and Long Term Care, please do not hesitate to contact me at 608 246.7014.

Sincerely,

Heather A. Bruemmer
Executive Director

CC: Rep. Bernier
Sen. Harsdorf