



LEE NERISON

96TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Remarks of Representative Lee Nerison
on Assembly Bill 592
Assembly Committee on Jobs and the Economy
January 13, 2016

Chair Neylon and Committee Members:

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As the author of Assembly Bill 592, I thank you for holding a hearing on this legislation which would allow employees of collection agencies to work from home. Senator LeMahieu has authored the companion bill, Senate Bill 438.

I have worked with the owner of a collection agency in western Wisconsin to address a provision in Wisconsin law that only permits the operation of a collection agency at or from the location specified in the license. This statute was adopted in 1971 and I believe this is a case of our statutes not keeping pace with modern business practices.

Many Wisconsin collection agencies are small locally-owned businesses that want to expand their search for eligible employees to reflect modern telecommuting practices but cannot do so under current law. The common-sense change in this bill allows these employers to hire applicants who are not restricted by location or transportation, which is a tremendous benefit for the rural parts of our state.

Keep in mind that under this bill, the employee of a licensed collection agency must comply with the same requirements that would apply if working from the licensed office. All provisions regarding data security and confidentiality as specified by the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act and the Fair Credit Reporting Act will continue to apply.

I would appreciate your support for this change so that collection agencies can expand their pool of job applicants similar to the practices of other private sector businesses.

Thank you for your consideration.



DEVIN LEMAHIEU

STATE SENATOR

DATE: January 13th, 2015
RE: **Testimony on 2015 Assembly Bill 592**
TO: The Assembly Committee on Jobs and the Economy
FROM: Senator Devin LeMahieu

Thank you Chairman Neylon and Members of the Assembly Committee on Jobs and the Economy for hearing testimony today on Senate Bill 438. Many Wisconsin collection agencies are small, locally owned businesses which often struggle to fill vacancies, especially when their businesses are growing.

The owner of a collections agency in my district shared a story about an applicant that applied for an open position. The individual has multiple sclerosis and explained that there would be days or even weeks when he would be physically unable to come to work. He expressed an interest in working from home during these times.

SB 592 specifies that an employee of a licensed collection agency may work from home if they comply with all the same requirements that would apply if working from the licensed office. All provisions regarding data security and confidentiality as specified by the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act and Fair Credit Reporting Act will continue to apply under this bill.

Remote office spaces have become more common with the advancement of the internet and other technologies. This bill will facilitate the growth of small businesses by allowing collection agencies to grow without having to add new office space. Additionally, the agencies will be able to hire people with transportation issues or physical limitations who can't travel to a worksite but can work from home. Studies have shown that the ability to work from home produces happier and more productive employees.

Thank you for your consideration on Assembly Bill 592.