



# JERRY PETROWSKI

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

## *Senate Bill 509*

January 14, 2016

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak today on Senate Bill 509, which relates to seasonal weight limitations for vehicles transporting agricultural crops.

Current law allows certain agricultural vehicles to exceed weight limits, without a permit, by 15 percent between September 1 and December 31 of each year. Commonly referred to as the “fall harvest exemption”, it allows farmers to quickly transport harvested crops from the field back to the home or storage facilities. Farmers are able to accommodate bigger loads at the most crucial harvest times.

After hearing from many in the farming community, we realized that the current exemption fails to include the full harvest times of some of Wisconsin’s most popular crops. Many farmers growing crops such as peas, potatoes, and cranberries often begin harvesting much earlier than the current start date of the exemption.

In order to better accommodate these important parts of our economy, the bill simply moves the start date for the 15 percent weight exemption up from September 1 to August 1. Making this simple change will allow farmers to continue to harvest these crops earlier and get them home and to market quicker.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak before you today on this topic. I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have at this time.

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