

# Sen. Darling: Red tape study shows need for Sunset Clause Bill

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Senator Alberta Darling  
[1-608-266-5830](tel:1-608-266-5830)

Madison – Wisconsin’s administrative code has 12 times more words than the entire Harry Potter series. While the Harry Potter books are fiction, the state’s administrative rules are having a very real effect on business. State Senator Alberta Darling says [a new study shows](#) why she is working to reform the rule process.

“For too long, bureaucrats have piled regulation on top of regulation,” Darling said, “We can’t keep doing things the same way just because that’s the way we’ve always done it. It’s time to give our administrative rules a full review.”

Researchers at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University studied restrictions in regulations of 12 states and found Wisconsin’s to be among the most burdensome. Wisconsin has 159,253 restrictions. By comparison, Minnesota’s restriction count is 98,321 and Michigan’s is 83,484.

A “restriction” is defined as “terms or phrases that signify legal constraints and obligations.” The restriction count for the Department of Natural Resource’s administrative code alone (55,013) is almost the size of Arizona’s entire code (63,919). Senator Darling says her legislation will continue Republican’s efforts to bring accountability and transparency to the rules process.

“This week, Governor Walker signed the REINS Act, authored by Senator Devin LeMahieu and Representative Adam Neylon, which is a major step toward reforming our state’s regulations,” Darling said, “The next step is to review each and every chapter of administrative rules. That’s why I introduced the Sunset Clause bill with Representative Steineke to make sure every rule is necessary.” Once it is established, administrative code or red tape can exist forever. Senate Bill 295 will retire entire chapters of code every seven years. One year before it expires, the code can be renewed by going through the rule making the process all over again. The process will allow more input from the public and lawmakers. Senator Darling represents portions of Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington and Waukesha Counties.