

Sen. Fitzgerald, Rep. Jagler: Introduce legislation to remove the R-Word from state administrative code

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[Madison, WI] – Today, Representative John Jagler (R-Watertown) and Senator Scott Fitzgerald (R-Juneau) are introducing legislation to remove the use of the phrase “mental retardation” and its derivatives from all state administrative code, replacing it with the phrase “intellectual disability.”

Representative Jagler released the following statement:

“Having a daughter with Down syndrome, I know how hurtful the R-Word can be. Removing this phrase from statute in 2012 was a good start, but I believe we can do better. Our administrative code shouldn’t contain terms that would make others not feel included or make them feel like they are not as valuable as their neighbors. Updating the terminology will go a long way into making our state government more respectful of its citizens with disabilities.”

Senator Scott Fitzgerald added:

“People with intellectual disabilities and their loved ones find the R-word incredibly offensive – it should have no place in Wisconsin’s administrative code. I’m happy to work with Rep. Jagler to see that this important piece of legislation passes the

Senate, and look forward to working with Governor Evers to make sure that it gets signed into law.”

[2011 Act 126](#) was signed into law, deleting the offensive phrase from all state statutes. However this offensive terminology can still be found in the state’s administrative code in rules promulgated by numerous state agencies. This new bill substitutes the phrase “intellectual disability,” striking the offensive phrase.