

# WCMA: Applauds Senate passage of regulatory reform for dairy farmers, processors

Posted on Wednesday, Feb 19, 2020

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MADISON, WI – The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) applauded members of the Wisconsin State Senate, who today unanimously approved Senate Bill 685 (SB 685), removing a requirement that affidavits be collected annually, attesting that milk comes from cows which have not been given synthetic bovine growth hormone (rBST).

“Annual rBST affidavit collection is time-consuming and duplicative, when more than 90 percent of the state’s milk supply is rBST-free, and has been for years,” said John Umhoefer, WCMA Executive Director. “We appreciate the true leadership of Senators André Jacque and Jeff Smith to shepherd this common-sense regulatory reform through the legislative process.”

SB 685 was authored by Senators André Jacque (R-De Pere) and Jeff Smith (D-Eau Claire), while its Assembly companion has been championed by Representatives Travis Tranel (R-Cuba City), Dave Considine (D-Baraboo), and Assembly Committee on Agriculture Chair Gary Tauchen (R-Bonduel).

The proposal also has the support of the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection, which at the direction of Governor Tony Evers began a lengthy rule-making process to address industry’s concerns earlier this year. SB 685 expedites the matter.

“No other state requires annual rBST affidavit collection, meaning that Wisconsin’s regulation has our farmers and processors at a competitive disadvantage,” said Umhoefer. “They – literally – cannot afford to wait on regulatory changes designed

to help them grow, and we thank lawmakers for recognizing the urgent need for this reform.”

Speaker Robin Vos (R-Rochester) has scheduled an Assembly floor vote on the proposal for Thursday, February 20.