



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 11, 2019

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Rep. Bowen Introduces New Bipartisan Legislation to Increase Employer Flexibility in Hiring Practices

Bill Would Limit Liability for Employers Who Opt to Not Drug Test for THC and Other Cannabinoids

MADISON - Earlier today, State Rep. David Bowen (D-Milwaukee), along with State Rep. Shae Sortwell (R-Two Rivers) and State Sen. Jeff Smith (D-Eau Claire), introduced a new bipartisan bill that would increase employer flexibility in hiring practices by limiting employer liability in cases where employers choose to not test employees for the presence of THC and other cannabinoids.

“Wisconsin, like many other states, is facing a shortage of qualified workers: with a low unemployment rate and an aging population, among other factors, many of our state’s employers are unable to quickly fill positions of need with qualified workers. In other parts of the country, especially in regions where cannabis is legal, we have seen employers trend away from drug testing current and prospective employees for THC in order to expand the pool of potential employees. In Wisconsin though, employers have been uncomfortable taking this step due to the fact that cannabis is still illegal in our state and because they are concerned about liability claims over employees who test positive for THC. By removing one of those concerns, this bipartisan bill would help develop Wisconsin’s workforce and put our employers on an equal footing with others around the country,” said Rep. Bowen.

The bill, LRB-4116, would limit the liability of employers that opt to not test employees or prospective employees for the presence of THC, a synthetic cannabinoid, or a controlled substance analog of THC or a synthetic cannabinoid. The bill includes common-sense exceptions, including certain safety- and security-sensitive positions, positions that contract with the federal government, and others.

Continued Rep. Bowen, “We have to recognize that Wisconsin does not exist in a vacuum. The majority of American states have legalized the use of cannabis to some degree, including almost all of our neighbors. Should employees who choose to legally consume cannabis on vacation or on the weekend be punished on the job months later?”

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