



HOWARD MARKLEIN

STATE SENATOR • 17TH SENATE DISTRICT

Capitol Update By Senator Howard Marklein October 1, 2021

Senate Session Recap

The Wisconsin State Senate was in session on Tuesday, September 28, 2021. We voted on 39 appointments and 27 bills.

We approved 39 of the Governor's appointments including six cabinet members: Joaquin Altoro, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Housing & Economic Development Authority (WHEDA); Daniel Carlton, Jr., Administrator of the Wisconsin Ethics Commission; Dawn Crim, Secretary of the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS); Melissa Hughes, CEO of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corp. (WEDC); Randy Romanski, Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP); and Craig Thompson, Secretary of the Department of Transportation (DOT).

We also passed 27 bills, including two I authored. Senate Bill (SB) 345 designates State Highway 21 through Necedah, WI as a Purple Heart Memorial Highway. SB 437 closes a loophole for unregistered vehicles during a state of emergency. Both of these bills were ideas brought to me by constituents who recognized an opportunity and a challenge. They asked for my help to bring legislation forward. I appreciate the support of my colleagues in the State Senate who voted "yes" to move these proposals to the State Assembly.

In addition to my bills, we passed Born Alive legislation that requires a doctor to provide care to a baby born alive during an attempted abortion. I believe we should protect life, even when an attempt is made to end that life within confines of current law. This bill would change current law to require health care providers to provide care to a baby who is born alive, even if the mother intended to end the child's life.

We passed a bill to require Medical Assistance to pay for complex rehabilitation technology (CRT), such as a power wheelchair, if it is prescribed by a physician and the individual resides in a nursing home. Under current law, Medical Assistance (MA) is able to create rules about which types of technology may be reimbursed and right now, power wheelchairs for nursing home residents are not covered, nor are replacement parts. This bill will help nursing home residents gain more mobility and independence. More importantly, it will provide coverage for a person who moves from their home with a CRT into a nursing home.

Another piece of legislation we passed revives the statewide Urban Search and Rescue Task Force and Regional Emergency Response Team. The contract for Wisconsin's structural collapse team expired in 2019. Our local partners who serve on these task forces put themselves in dangerous situations and our municipalities, who have limited budgets, put themselves in tight financial positions to keep our state safe. The changes included in this bill are needed so we are not continuing to leave Wisconsin vulnerable to future emergencies.

Finally, we passed a bill to authorize the creation of Expanded Function Dental Auxiliaries (EFDAs) in Wisconsin. An EFDA is a dental practitioner who works under the supervision of a dentist and can perform a variety of procedures including completing restorations, taking impressions and providing sealants. EFDAs can be incredibly useful in taking care of patients who are scheduled for standard visits and do not require intense or comprehensive care. They have the potential of taking some strain off of busy dental practices and may address shortages.

Again, I am grateful for my colleagues' support for my legislation and I am encouraged by the impact the other legislation may have on our communities. Visit www.insession.legis.wisconsin.gov/senate to view our calendar from September 28, 2021 to learn about the other bills we passed. We will continue to meet, in session, throughout the next several months through the end of the legislative session.

For more information and to connect with me, visit my website <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/senate/17/marklein> and subscribe to my weekly E-Update by sending an email to Sen.Marklein@legis.wisconsin.gov. Do not hesitate to call 608-266-0703 if you have input, ideas or need assistance with any state-related matters.

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