



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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Sunseting Bill Shines Light on Red Tape

Madison - By sunseting red tape rules, a new bill will bring sunlight to the bureaucratic process. State Senator Alberta Darling (R-River Hills) and State Representative Jim Steineke (R-Kaukauna) are introducing legislation which would sunset administrative code chapters every seven years. Senator Darling says red tape needs to keep up with the times.

"With how quickly technology and the marketplace change, we can't keep doing things the same way just because that's the way we've always done it," Darling said, "Adding sunset clauses to entire chapters of rules will make sure they stay relevant with our fast-changing world."

Currently, once it's established, administrative code or red tape can exist forever - and often do, even when the rules don't reflect the times. This bill would retire entire chapters of code every seven years.

One year before it expires, the agency can seek the chapter's re-adoption by going to the Legislature. If the relevant standing committees object, then the code can be renewed by going through the rule making process all over again. The process will allow for more input from the public and lawmakers and regular opportunities to hold bureaucracies accountable.

"By returning some of the responsibility of rule-making back to elected officials, we're creating an atmosphere of accountability," said Steineke. "We need to ensure rules are serving the needs of Wisconsinites rather than the whims of individuals within state agencies."

Senator Darling and Representative Steineke are currently seeking co-sponsors for the legislation.

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