



April 17, 2019

Representative Tusler
Chair, Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections
Wisconsin State Capitol, Rm 22 W
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Representative Tusler and Committee members:

The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) thanks the committee for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Assembly Bill 168.

AB 168 makes common sense changes to Wisconsin's law that benefits voters with disabilities who communicate nonverbally and voters with developmental or physical disabilities that affect verbal speech to the degree that an election official may have difficulty understanding the voter's communication. Forms of photo identification used by voters include the voter's name, and most include the person's address. The bill's allowance for the election official or another person chosen by the voter to state the voter's name on behalf of the voter with a disability provides the required verification that the voter is correctly identified on the poll or separate list.

BPDD is charged under the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act with advocacy, capacity building, and systems change to improve self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life for people with developmental disabilities (more about BPDD https://wi-bpdd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Legislative_Overview_BPDD.pdf).

Our role is to seek continuous improvement across all systems—education, transportation, health care, employment, etc.—that touch the lives of people with disabilities. Our work requires us to have a long-term vision of public policy that not only sees current systems as they are, but how these systems could be made better for current and future generations of people with disabilities.

Thank you for your consideration,

Beth Swedeen, Executive Director
Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities