



NANCY VANDERMEER

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 70TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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VanderMeer Supports Legislation Removing “R-word” from Agency Rules

Madison – Representative Nancy VanderMeer (R-Tomah) voted in support of legislation that removes the “R-word” from agency rules. Assembly Bill 20, passed during the State Assembly’s floor session today, instructs state agencies to replace this phrase and any phrase similar to it with “intellectual disability.”

“I think it’s great that Representative Jagler decided to bring this legislation forward earlier this year. I co-sponsored the legislation and was happy to support its passage on the floor this afternoon. Anything that can be done to reduce adverse stigmas associated with individuals that have unique abilities is a good thing. It’s important that all members of our society are represented with dignity,” VanderMeer said.

In 2012, the legislature passed Act 126, which deleted the phrase “mental retardation” from Wisconsin statutes. However, the statute didn’t instruct state agencies to take the phrase out of their rules. Many state agencies still have this phrase or something similar written in the administrative code. Although Governor Evers recently issued an executive order for state agencies to carry out the intent of the bill, this legislation is necessary to ensure that the word is removed and not used by the state in the future.

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The 70th Assembly District includes portions of Monroe, Jackson, Portage and Wood counties.