



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

October 13, 2017

Senator Duey Stroebel, Chair
Senate Committee on Government Operations, Technology and Consumer Protection
State Capitol, Room 18 South
Madison, Wisconsin

Dear Senator Stroebel,

Please consider our request for a public hearing on Senate Bill 256 by the Senate Committee on Government Operations, Technology and Consumer Protection.

SB 256 would establish a process for individuals with special needs, including non-English speakers, those in need of sign language interpreters, and those who need materials in alternate formats to access the resources necessary to participate in public hearings and other meetings.

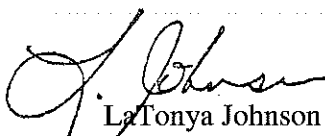
Yesterday, the Senate Committee on Labor and Regulatory Reform held a hearing on SB 275, drawing hundreds of members of Wisconsin's Latino community to testify. English was not the first language of many of those who wished to speak, yet no plan was in place to provide interpreters. Fortunately, other members of the public attending the hearing assisted, but there was a clear barrier for non-English speakers to participate. A similar hearing was held during the last legislative session on AB 450 in the Assembly Committee on Urban and Local Affairs, and the same problem occurred.

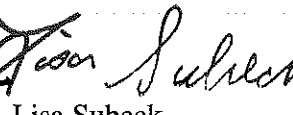
SB 256 would address this problem by ensuring interpreters or materials in alternate formats are available for those who need them. Our bill would break down language barriers and also provide accommodations for people with disabilities to better enable all of Wisconsin's residents to participate in the civic process and access their government.

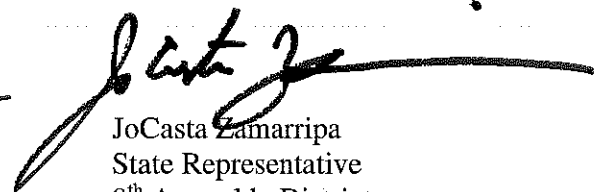
If you have any questions or concerns about this proposal, we would be happy to meet with you to discuss them.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. We look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,


LaTonya Johnson
State Senator
6th Senate District


Lisa Subeck
State Representative
78th Assembly District


JoCasta Zamarripa
State Representative
8th Assembly District

cc: Majority Leader Fitzgerald
Democratic Leader Shilling
Ranking Democratic Member, Senator Wirch