Alberta Darling
Wisconsin State Senator
Member, Joint Committee on Finance

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
AND STATE AFFAIRS
ASSEMBLY BILL 319
OCTOBER 19, 2011

Thank you Chairman Van Roy and members of the Assembly Committee on Homeland Security and State Affairs for allowing me this opportunity to offer my testimony on Assembly Bill 319. Assembly Bill 319 will allow municipalities to reopen their contracts to modify compensation and fringe benefits.

While serving as the Co-Chair of the Joint Finance Committee and working on the 2011-12 state budget, I was asked by the leadership of the Milwaukee Public Schools if I would be willing to author an amendment to allow them to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Milwaukee Teachers Education Association. The idea was to allow them to work on certain portions of their contract without voiding the whole contract. MPS hoped MTEA would make some cost saving concessions to avoid multiple layoffs. Ultimately, MTEA chose to ignore this proposal, which would have saved 198 jobs according to MPS. However, the option was there.

When Representative Wynn came forward with this proposal, I asked to be the Senate lead on the bill due to my experience with getting the MOU amendment added to the budget. I'm sure there are many local governments that would like this opportunity to work with local unions who would be willing to make concessions to help the municipality's budget.

Assembly Bill 319 will provide municipalities and unions more flexibility and more options in working with their local budgets. Assembly Bill 319 can help save taxpayers money and could help to save jobs as well. I hope you will join us in supporting this bill.

Capitol Office:
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7882
Phone: 608-266-5830
Fax: 608-267-0588

Toll-free: 1-800-863-1113
Email: sen.darling@legis.wisconsin.gov
Web page: www.legis.wisconsin.gov/senate/sen08/news/

District Office:
N88 W16621 Appleton Avenue, Suite 200
Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin 53051
Phone: 262-250-9440
Fax: 262-250-8510

WISCONSIN
COUNTIES
ASSOCIATION

22 EAST MIFFLIN STREET, SUITE 900
MADISON, WI 53703
TOLL FREE: 1.866.404.2700
PHONE: 608.663.7188
FAX: 608.663.7189
www.wicounties.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Members of the Assembly Homeland Security and State Affairs Committee

FROM: David Callender, Legislative Associate

DATE: October 19, 2011

SUBJECT: Support for Assembly Bill 319

The Wisconsin Counties Association supports Assembly Bill 319.

Assembly Bill 319 allows municipal employers, including counties, the option to reopen employee contracts with respect to reductions in cost of compensation or fringe benefits, subject to union approval, for an additional period beyond the language in Wisconsin Act 2011.

This additional time would provide more flexibility to local governments in their budgeting processes.

WCA respectfully requests that the Committee support Assembly Bill 319.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

LYNDA BRADSTREET
DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

JON HOCHKAMMER
DIRECTOR OF INSURANCE OPERATIONS

JOHN REINEMANN
LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

J. MICHAEL BLASKA
DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS & SERVICES

MARK D. O'CONNELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR