



MELISSA AGARD
STATE SENATOR

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Contact: Sidney Litke, Communications Director, 608-266-9170

Senator Agard Introduces “People’s Voice Act” Legislation

Legislation would allow the public to petition for public hearings on legislation

MADISON - Today, Senator Melissa Agard (D-Madison) introduced the “People’s Voice Act.” [LRB-2481/1](#) would allow for the public to petition for a bill to receive a public hearing. If the petition receives signatures by qualified equaling at least 3 percent of the vote cast for the office of governor in the most recent gubernatorial election, the Elections Commission must certify the bill for a public hearing and file the certification with the legislature. The petition can be signed through a paper form or electronically. If enough signatures are received, the legislature must hold a public hearing on the bill within 30 days of the petition being certified.

Senator Agard released this statement regarding the legislation:

“Our first job as legislators is to listen to those we serve - they are our bosses. The policies we introduce should reflect the people’s will, but currently, there are too many Wisconsinites who feel left out of the governing process. Their viewpoint is being ignored. This bill allows for the public to have a louder voice in their state government.

“Wisconsin has a history of citizen engagement and clean government. But in recent years, we have seen bills that are overwhelmingly supported by Wisconsin voters die in committee without a public hearing. When a majority of Wisconsinites support expanding Medicaid, legalizing cannabis, fair maps, closing the ‘Dark Store Loophole’, and gun safety measures, those bills should be prioritized. It is appalling that legislation aimed at addressing the issues that matter most to the ordinary people of Wisconsin never receive a public hearing in the legislature. It is past time that the people of Wisconsin see meaningful action from their government on these bills and more. LRB-2147 gives them an opportunity to create and see that action.

“Our legislative process should be fair, and should recognize our fundamental rights - but it is currently a mess. Let’s stop playing politics and create a system that prioritizes the will of the people. What we continue to see in the Capitol is a system tilted in favor of the wealthy or well-connected. It is time to bring the process straight to the people. LRB-2481/1 provides the public a pathway to ensure that their voice and their values are heard. This is a bold and necessary step toward better governance for the people of Wisconsin.”

According to the non-partisan Legislative Reference Bureau, less than half of the bills introduced in the last legislative session received a public hearing.

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