



## PATRICK TESTIN STATE SENATOR

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Contact: Sen. Patrick Testin  
(608) 266-3123

# Senate overrides veto of APRN Modernization Act

MADISON, Wis. – Sen. Patrick Testin (R-Stevens Point) is pleased the Wisconsin State Senate voted today to override the governor’s veto of the Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Modernization Act.

“It’s no secret that we are experiencing significant workforce challenges in the healthcare industry and it’s only expected to get worse,” Sen. Testin said. “About 40 percent of Wisconsin’s need for primary care providers is currently unmet and it’s likely that we’ll have to add more than 740 physicians over the next 10 years to meet the increasing demand for care. However, by 2035, the state’s supply of primary care providers is anticipated to grow by only 4 percent – well below the 740 threshold.

“Knowing this, it makes absolutely no sense that Gov. Evers would veto the APRN Modernization Act and exacerbate the problem even further,” Sen. Testin added. “Why would we want to make it harder for nurse practitioners to work in Wisconsin, especially in our rural areas and underserved communities? Fortunately, the Senate did the responsible thing today and cleaned up the governor’s mess.”

The APRN Modernization Act authorizes registered nurses in Wisconsin to practice independently without the need for a collaborative agreement with a physician. Twenty-seven red and blue states – including Minnesota and Iowa – have enacted comparable policies. Nevertheless, Gov. Evers still made the irresponsible decision to veto the APRN Modernization Act because he does not believe that registered nurses have the “appropriate education, training, experience and supervision to provide care to Wisconsinites.”

“Yet, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Evers administration rolled back the restrictions on our state’s 8,000 APRNs to ensure residents were able to get the care they needed,” Sen. Testin said. “But now, for some reason, Gov. Evers doesn’t think those same nurses who stepped up to the plate can do the jobs they are trained to do. This seems to be a physician-led effort to minimize the role of nurses as caregivers, something that would completely devastate our healthcare industry.”

According to a study conducted by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, the temporary action during the pandemic ended up benefiting Wisconsinites by promoting expanded access to care and by increasing the resiliency of the healthcare system without compromising patient safety.

“No other state that has allowed trained medical professionals to fully practice their scope has ever returned to a more restrictive model,” Sen. Testin said. “That’s because they see what numerous studies have already found: that advanced practice nurses are more than capable of providing sufficient care.”

To help address the concerns of stakeholders and the governor, the original bill was amended to require that APRNs refer to physicians and other healthcare providers when a case is outside their expertise.

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