STATE REPRESENTATIVE
TERESE BERCEAU

WISCONSIN STATE ASSEMBLY

76TH DISTRICT

November 9, 2009

Representative Fred Kessler, Chair
Assembly Committee on State Affairs and Homeland Security
Room 302 North
State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Representative Kessler,

I am the lead Assembly author of Assembly Bill 452, which has been referred to the Committee on State Affairs and Homeland Security. The Senate companion, Senate Bill 292, passed committee unanimously and was approved by the full Senate on a voice vote. Both bills have bi-partisan co-sponsorship. This measure allows the Wisconsin Historical Society Press to print books under the same requirements currently granted to the UW Press. I respectfully request that you schedule a public hearing on this legislation as soon as possible.

The Historical Society is currently exempted from using the state printing contract for its hard cover books and for the Wisconsin Magazine of History. However, unlike UW Press, the Society does not have an exemption for printing paperback books. As a result, the Society has had challenges with the quality of its paperback publications, including returns by customers for refunds.

When this language was drafted in 1945, it was meant to provide an exemption for all Society publications intended for resale. At the end of World War II, paperback books were a relatively new form of publication and the words "hard cover" were included in the statutes to distinguish between books published by the Society (which in the 1940s appeared in hard cover only) and routine pamphlets and other printing done by the Society. Today, however, the book market has changed considerably and customers expect books to be available in high quality paperbacks.

AB 452 will allow the Historical Society to earn increased revenue from book sales with no impact on state General Purpose Revenue. The Society will still have to solicit competitive bids for printing, but it would no longer be subject to a state printing contract that is not designed for the printing of books for the retail market.

I would be more than happy to meet with you at your convenience if you have questions about this proposal or need any additional information. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Terese

Terese Berceau

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WISCONSIN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Testimony before the Assembly Committee on State Affairs and Homeland Security 2009 AB 452; 2009 SB 292. December 17, 2009

I am Michael Stevens and am Administrator of the Division of Historic Preservation-Public History at the Wisconsin Historical Society The Society supports AB452 and SB292. A relatively minor change to a law enacted in 1945 would enable the Society Press to print books in the same fashion granted to the University of Wisconsin Press and allow improved earned revenues from sales for the Society with no impact on GPR.

Under *Wisconsin Statutes* 35.01(3), the Society is exempted from using the state printing contract for its hard cover books and for the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*. Paperback books are not provided with this exemption because the Society published only hardcover books in 1945 when the law was changed. The intent of the bill drafters in 1945 was to provide an exemption for all Society publications intended for resale. Changes in the market, in which buyers expect high quality paperbacks, have distorted the original intent of the law, which was to have routine printing being done through the state contract and books intended for resale to be done by competitive bid.

Currently, the Society has challenges with the quality of the printing of its paperback publications using the Class 3 contract. Books printed under the Class 3 contract in the past 2 years have resulted in higher damaged return rates, averaging 400 to 600 copies returned for $3,000-4,000 in refunds, as compared with a normal average of 30 to 50 damaged returns or $250-$300 in refunds. The amount of printing we normally do is small. Last year we did $87,664.16 in class 3 printing due to the unusually high number of reprints, but the two previous fiscal years are more typical in which we did $35,410.20 and $27,221.46 of printing.

Deleting the words "hard cover" from the statute would provide an exemption identical to that provided to the University of Wisconsin Press, which currently publishes both hardcover and paperback books. The Society would still use the competitive bid process to secure printers. Only 3-4 books per year out of our average of 12 titles per year would fall under the Class 3 contract. This contract is intended to save time in the bid process for printing and works well for forms, booklets, and pamphlets not designed to be sold in the retail market. However, due to special finishes and non-standard trim sizes, which are necessary to compete in the retail/trade market and to stand up to retail, school, and library standards, effectively using the Class 3 contract takes production and fiscal services staff more time than for a standard book print bid.

The Society developed a bid template that addresses the special needs of its program, and this template saves a great deal of time over having to negotiate the changes from the Class 3 contract. Using our template takes approximately 2 hours of staff time to prepare as compared with 4 to 5 hours required to look up prices in the price charts, look for where our specifications differ from the standards in the contract (trim size, cover coatings, etc), and call to get new quotes for the revised specifications and then go through a different vendor for paper. Nearly all of the Society books require some sort of revision to the standard specifications for this class of printing.

The result of this minor change in the law will be a more effective approach to printing, increase in the quality of the work, and generation of more earned revenues.