

Motion: Representative Pocan authored Motion #378 – Transfer Certification of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Counselors to the Department of Regulation and Licensing. Rep. Pocan moved and Rep. Kaufert seconded Motion #378. **(Passed 10-6)**

Motion #378

Representative Pocan

Health and Family Services – Community, Disability, and Elder Services

Transfer Certification of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Counselors to the Department of Regulation and Licensing

Move to require the Department of Regulation and Licensing (DRL), effective January 1, 2006, to certify alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) counselors and provide \$42,600 PR in 2005-06 and \$54,800 PR in 2006-07 and authorize 1.0 PR position annually under DRL for this purpose. Reestimate GPR-Earned by \$6,700 in 2005-06 and \$13,400 in 2006-07. Require DRL to assess the following fees to support the costs of certifying AODA counselors, beginning January 1, 2006: (a) a \$53 fee from new applicants for initial certifications; (b) a \$70 biennial certification renewal fee; and (c) and all applicable examination fees. Direct DRL to promulgate rules regarding the certification of AODA counselors. Authorize DRL to establish emergency rules for these certifications without showing an emergency exists. Direct DRL to review and recommend any revised renewal fee for AODA certifications based on actual credential renewal costs for administering and enforcing these certifications as part of the agency's 2007-09 biennial budget request. Specify that the renewal date for AODA certifications would be March 1 of odd-numbered years.

Additionally, prohibit the Wisconsin Certification Council, or any entity other than DRL, from certifying AODA counselors on or after January 1, 2006.

Note:

The DHFS authority to certify AODA counselors is broadly outlined under s. 51.03(4) of the statutes, which requires that DHFS promote and create coalitions of state, counties and providers of mental health and alcohol and other drug abuse service providers. DHFS must promote access to appropriate alcohol and other drug abuse services. Currently, the statutes do not specify the eligibility requirements for certification, or the process DHFS must use to certify individuals as AODA counselors. However, administrative rules (HFS 75.02(84)), generally specify that a substance abuse counselor is a person certified by the Wisconsin Certification Board.

Currently, individuals that are certified pay an initial fee of \$150 and annual renewal fees of \$120 to extend their certification (there are additional fees for textbooks, late fees, workshops, and testing preparations manuals). WCB's annual budget is approximately \$500,000, which includes \$121,500 in federal substance abuse prevention and treatment (SAPT) funds allocated from DHFS and \$378,500 in fee revenue.

Under the motion, DRL would assume the responsibility to certify AODA counselors and federal funding under SAPT would no longer subsidize the cost of AODA certification. DRL has estimated that there would be one-time costs of \$32,300 associated with information technology changes related to adding a new profession, the development of forms and applications, and the

promulgation of rules (\$11,900), and the development of test specifications and exams (\$20,400).

The Department estimates that annual costs of \$141,300 would be incurred in connection with the certification of AODA counselors. This estimate includes \$54,800 of new costs (435,900 annually for salaries and fringe benefits for 1.0 FTE new position and \$18,900 annually for supplies and services). The estimate also includes \$86,500 of base level salaries and fringe benefits that would be reallocated to perform this function. Assuming that DRL would develop rules for AODA certification by January 1, 2006, at which point the Department would take over certification, then the one-time costs of \$32,300 identified above would be incurred during the first six months of 2005-06, along with one-half of the annual continuing costs during the latter half of that fiscal year.

Table 1 summarizes these reallocated base level costs and estimated new costs that would be incurred by DRL for the certification of AODA counselors in 2005-06 and 2006-07.

TABLE 1

Base Reallocations and New Funding Requirements for AODA Counselor Certification

(PR-Funds)

2005-06

General Program Operations	Base Funding	New Funding	Total Costs
One-time costs	\$11,000	\$900	\$11,900
Salaries and Fringe Benefits	26,700	18,000	44,700
Supplies and Services	0	1,300	1,300
Total	\$37,700	\$20,200	\$57,900
Examination Program Operations	Base Funding	New Funding	Total Costs
One-time costs	\$6,200	\$14,200	\$20,400
Salaries and Fringe Benefits	16,600	0	16,600
Supplies and Services	0	8,200	8,200
Total	22,800	22,400	45,200
Total 2005-06 Costs	\$60,500	\$42,600	\$103,100

2006-07

General Program Operations	Base Funding	New Funding	Total Costs
Salaries and Fringe Benefits	\$53,300	\$35,900	\$89,200
Supplies and Services	0	2,600	2,600
Total	\$53,300	\$38,500	\$91,800
Examination Program Operations	Base Funding	New Funding	Total Costs
Salaries and Fringe Benefits	\$33,200	\$0	\$33,200
Supplies and Services	0	16,300	16,300
Total	\$33,200	\$16,300	\$49,500
Total 2006-07 Costs	\$86,500	\$54,800	\$141,300

DRL has estimated that if would be necessary to assess a \$53 initial certification fee for new applicants and a \$70 biennial certification renewal fee. Examination fees would also be charged and based on the actual costs of preparing or purchasing the exam and the costs for administering the exam. All examination and certification fees charged by DRL must also include an allowance for crediting 10% of the total fee amount to the general fund. Based on these costs, DRL

estimates that oral exams would be assessed a fee of \$236 and written exams would be assessed a fee of \$76. Table 2 shows the estimated revenues that would be received by the Department under this motion.

TABLE 2

Annual Certification and Examination Revenues

Fee Revenue General Fund Revenue

General Program Operations		
Initial Certifications	\$7,200	\$800
Renewal Certifications	94,500	10,500
Subtotal	\$101,700	\$11,300
Examinations Program Operations		
Oral Examinations	\$10,600	\$1,200
Written Examinations	13,700	900
Subtotal	\$24,300	\$2,100
Total	\$126,000	\$13,400

(Change to Bill: \$20,100 GPR-Earned and \$97,400 PR and 1.0 PR position)