



**Sheldon Wasserman
State Representative**

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**WASSERMAN OFFERS BILL TO CHANGE
LICENSING REQUIREMENTS FOR OLDER DRIVERS**

MADISON—State Representative Sheldon Wasserman (D-Milwaukee) today announced plans to introduce legislation to revise the licensing requirements for certain older drivers.

In the 1997-99 budget, the drivers license renewal cycle for regular licenses was extended from four years to eight years. This extension is a convenience for drivers and a cost-saver for the DOT, but in some cases it may not be in the best individual or public interest. Wasserman, the legislature's only physician and the Ranking Member of the Assembly Committees on Health and Public Health, has worked with other medical professionals who contacted him with concerns about current Wisconsin law.

"I have developed a bill over the course of the past several months that strikes a balance between the public's interest and older citizens' driving privileges, in a way that I hope will increase roadway safety," said Wasserman.

Wasserman's legislation requires that driver renewals after the age of 70 will occur at 75, 78 and 80. Starting at the age of 80, the renewal cycle would be every two years and a road test demonstrating driving competency would be required. After the age of 94 years, vision examinations and road tests would be required annually. These provisions are based on the professional recommendations of Wasserman's colleagues and statistics showing that older drivers are safer than teenagers up until their seventies, when fatal crash rates rise sharply. By age 80 and older, the rate among men is more than twice as high as it is at age 40-74.

"It is time for Wisconsin to join the 21 other states that are taking steps to monitor driving abilities as people grow older. As our population continues to age, it is vitally important that we address this public safety issue," Wasserman stated.

"We have addressed concerns regarding younger drivers with our graduated driver licensing law. My legislation focuses on the opposite end of the age spectrum. It is a work in progress that I hope will inspire debate and action on the matter," he said.

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