



SENATOR PEGGY LEHNER
6th District

Sponsor Testimony- SB 249
Senate Transportation, Commerce, and Workforce Committee
February 12, 2020

Chairman McColley, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Transportation, Commerce, and Workforce Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on SB 249, which would require new public buildings to have at least one restroom facility with an adult changing station for those with special needs or disabilities. This legislation will be known as Matthew's Law, named for a constituent who inspired this bill.

While crafting this bill, it was important to try and make this bill as flexible as possible for business owners. For that reason, exemptions can be granted if the building department or superintendent determine that installing an adult changing table would not be feasible, it would not allow for federal accessibility standards, it would destroy the historic significance of a building, or the building is not frequented by the public. This bill also would only require new building or those undergoing major renovations totaling \$50,000 or more to add an adult changing station to their restroom facilities.

This legislation would also allow for a tax credit for any taxpayer who is required to install an adult changing table in their business. The credit cannot exceed \$250 and must be claimed in the taxable year in which the table was installed. Typically, the cost of a table can range from a few hundred dollars to a few thousand, depending on the type of table. The intention of this legislation is not to create a burden on businesses, but rather to help families with special needs to be able to access the same services that any other family can. Think about your family. Don't you want the opportunity to take your family to, say, the zoo or a restaurant without having to worry if there is a clean place to go to the bathroom?

Currently, many adults with special needs are not able to use handicapped bathrooms because they are unable to fit securely on baby changing stations and must be changed on bathroom floors. This legislation would ensure that adults with disabilities are given the dignity and inclusion they deserve, while also providing a safe, clean place for them and their caregivers. This will allow for those adults, their families, and their caregivers to patronize local businesses, instead of having to sacrifice going out in public for fear that there will not be a changing place.

Thank you for your time and I would be happy to take any questions from the committee.