



ISSUES BRIEF

October 22, 2025

Senate Bill 459 – Updating Wisconsin’s Expert Testimony Standard

Background

The trucking industry works under a complex web of state and federal rules. When legal disputes arise—such as those involving crashes, safety issues, or equipment standards—expert testimony often plays a key role in how cases are decided.

What SB 459 Does

Senate Bill 459 makes a common-sense update to Wisconsin’s evidence code. It brings state law in line with the Federal Rule of Evidence 702, which was recently clarified to better define what counts as reliable expert testimony.

Under SB 459, courts must ensure that:

- Expert opinions are based on reliable data
- Experts use sound methods
- Their conclusions are reliably applied to the facts of the case

Why It Matters to Trucking

In our industry, expert witnesses can influence major outcomes—from accident lawsuits to questions about safety practices or equipment design. This bill helps make sure that only qualified, evidence-based, and scientifically supported testimony is allowed in court.

That means:

- Fewer speculative or unreliable opinions used against carriers
- More fairness and consistency in Wisconsin’s legal system
- Greater confidence that cases are decided on facts, not unproven theories

The Bottom Line

- Promotes fairness and predictability in court
- Aligns Wisconsin with federal and national standards
- Strengthens trust in evidence-based decision-making

WMCA Position

The Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association supports Senate Bill 459. It’s a practical, balanced reform that protects the integrity of Wisconsin’s courts and ensures that trucking companies—and all businesses—are judged by reliable, fact-based evidence.