



Date: February 5, 2026

To: Chair Duchow and members of the Assembly Committee on Financial Institutions

From: Janet Zander, Advocacy & Public Policy Coordinator

Re: Support for AB 968 re: Virtual currency kiosks

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of Assembly Bill 968. My name is Janet Zander, and I serve as the Advocacy and Public Policy Coordinator for the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc. (GWAAR). I also provide policy and advocacy support to the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN). Both WAAN and GWAAR are dedicated to advancing policies that help older adults live safely and independently in their own homes.

AB 968 is a vital recommendation from the Speaker's Task Force on Elder Services. It seeks to bring much-needed oversight to virtual currency kiosks—often called "crypto ATMs"—which currently operate in Wisconsin with a dangerous lack of regulation compared to traditional banks.

As of early 2026, there are over 700 of these kiosks in Wisconsin gas stations, convenience stores, and grocery stores. Unlike traditional ATMs, these machines are used to deposit physical cash and convert it into digital currency. Because they lack standard fraud protections, they have become a primary tool for criminals. We are increasingly hearing from victims—disproportionately adults aged 60 and older—who have lost anywhere from hundreds of dollars to their entire life savings.

These scams typically involve a criminal posing as a trusted official who directs a victim to withdraw cash and deposit it into a specific kiosk. Once the cash is converted to cryptocurrency, it is nearly impossible to trace or recover, often moving through multiple overseas digital wallets. Investigations have shown that for certain kiosk operators, over 90% of transactions are linked to fraudulent activity.

AB 968 introduces common-sense protections to stop these predators, including:

- **Licensing:** Requiring operators to be licensed as money transmitters.
- **Transaction Caps:** Limiting deposits to \$500 per day to prevent total loss of savings.
- **Fee Regulation:** Capping transaction charges at \$5 or 3% (currently, some operators charge as much as 30%).
- **Transparency:** Requiring clear fraud warnings on machines and providing both physical and electronic receipts.
- **Identity Verification:** Requiring operators to verify the identity of the depositor.

- **Refunds:** Mandating a full refund if a customer notifies the DFI or DOJ of a fraudulent transaction within 30 days.

Cryptocurrency fraud is uniquely devastating to older adults because it exploits technological unfamiliarity and cognitive changes, often wiping out decades of financial security in a single afternoon. By passing this bill, Wisconsin would join 17 other states that have already taken action to regulate this industry.

On behalf of WAAN and GWAAR, I respectfully urge you to support AB 968. Thank you for your time and your leadership on this critical issue.

The Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc. (GWAAR - <https://gwaar.org/>) is a nonprofit agency committed to supporting the successful delivery of aging programs and services in our service area consisting of 70 counties (all but Dane and Milwaukee) and 11 tribes in Wisconsin. GWAAR is one of three Area Agencies on Aging in Wisconsin. GWAAR provides lead aging agencies in our service area with training, technical assistance, and advocacy to ensure the availability and quality of programs and services to meet the changing needs of older people in Wisconsin. GWAAR is also a member of the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN - <https://gwaar.org/wisconsin-aging-advocacy-network>) a collaboration of organizations and individuals working with and for Wisconsin's older adults to shape policy solutions that ensure we can all thrive as we age.

Contact:

Janet Zander

Advocacy & Public Policy Coordinator, MPA, CSW

Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources

janet.zander@gwaar.org

(608) 228-7253