



TOM TIFFANY

STATE SENATOR • 12TH SENATE DISTRICT

Testimony on Assembly Bill 799

Assembly Committee on Mining and Rural Development

February 4, 2016

I would like to thank Chairman Kulp and members of this committee for hearing Assembly Bill 799 (AB 799) today.

This bill is a part of the Rural Wisconsin Initiative that aims to provide focus and leadership to the discussion about how to expand the opportunities in rural Wisconsin. If rural Wisconsin is to grow and be economically competitive, it is important that students have the opportunity to study subject areas that will prepare them to pursue high wage, high demand careers of the 21st Century. STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education programs play a critical role in this opportunity as many of the high demand careers of the near future will require STEM education.

Assembly Bill 799 will help small school districts in rural Wisconsin to start, expand, and maintain STEM education programs. It would require the Department of Public Instruction to allocate \$1 million per year for the Rural STEM Grant program. The grant maximum would be \$20,000 and applicants would be required to provide a 10% match.

I would like to thank Representative Tranel for his work on this bill. I also would again like to thank the Chairman and members of this committee for hearing Assembly Bill 799 today, and I ask for your support of this bill.

Tom Tiffany
Wisconsin State Senator
12th Senate District



TRAVIS TRANEL

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 49th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

(608) 266-1170
Toll-Free: (888) 872-0049
Rep.Tranel@legis.wi.gov

P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708-8953

Assembly Bill 799

Rural STEM Grant Program
Assembly Committee on Mining and Rural Development
February 4, 2016

Dear Chairman Kulp and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Assembly Bill 799. I sincerely appreciate the Chairman's willingness to hold a public hearing on this bill.

Also, I would like to acknowledge the hard work that my colleagues have done in crafting and moving forward the Rural Wisconsin Initiative. I think it is important that rural legislators work together in promoting positive legislation for rural Wisconsin.

During my time in the legislature, I have seen first-hand how STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education programs help to shape students' interest and prepare them to pursue high wage, high demand careers of the 21st Century.

In crafting AB 799, I consulted with public school superintendents from my district, the Rural Schools Alliance and proponents of STEM education. These groups provided valuable insight and assistance in helping me to draft a bill that would positively impact rural students.

The goal of the bill (AB 799) is to help small school districts in rural Wisconsin start, expand, and maintain STEM education programs. The bill creates a \$1 million competitive grant program to fund STEM education for small rural schools, with a maximum of \$20,000 going to any one school per year.

There are 191 small school districts that would qualify to apply for the complete grant. The Legislative Fiscal Bureau has prepared a memo that list all of these school districts. A copy has been included with my testimony for the committee to review.

If rural Wisconsin is to grow and be economically competitive, we need to graduate more students that are highly skilled and fully prepared to pursue science, technology, engineering and mathematics careers.

I would like to thank Senator Tiffany for working with me on this bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

One East Main, Suite 301 • Madison, WI 53703 • (608) 266-3847 • Fax: (608) 267-6873
Email: fiscal.bureau@legis.wisconsin.gov • Website: <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/lfb>

January 11, 2016

TO: Representative Travis Tranel
Room 308 North, State Capitol

FROM: Christa Pugh, Fiscal Analyst

SUBJECT: School Districts With Specified Population Density and Membership Count

At your request, I am providing information related to school districts meeting certain criteria similar to those used for sparsity aid under current law.

Under current law, districts are eligible for sparsity aid if in the previous school year, they had an enrollment of less than 725 pupils and a population density of less than 10 pupils per square mile of the district's attendance area. The attachment shows school districts that have a population density of less than 12 pupils per square mile of the district's area, in addition to a membership count of less than 1,000 pupils in the prior year. A total of 190 districts with a combined total membership of approximately 100,700 pupils meet these criteria. Statewide, there are 424 school districts with a combined total of approximately 857,000 members. The attachment includes data from the 2013-14 school year that was used to calculate sparsity aid distributions for the 2014-15 year.

I hope this information is helpful. Let me know if you have any further questions.

CP/lb
Attachment

ATTACHMENT

School Districts With Fewer Than 12 Pupils Per Square Mile and Membership of Less than 1,000 Pupils

<u>District</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Pupils per Sq. Mile</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Pupils per Sq. Mile</u>
Albany	439	6.47	Coleman	718	3.75
Algoma	692	10.13	Colfax	844	4.58
Alma	221	1.59	Cornell	432	4.28
Alma Center	580	4.32	Crandon	924	1.74
Almond-Bancroft	464	4.27	Crivitz	722	2.53
Argyle	337	4.05	Cuba City	632	8.02
Athens	452	3.54	Cumberland	938	5.00
Auburndale	851	5.66	Darlington Community	791	4.93
Augusta	655	4.06	Desoto Area	599	3.10
Bangor	575	6.25	Dodgeland	841	9.96
Barneveld	440	6.51	Dover #1	126	11.31
Bayfield	437	2.78	Drummond	409	0.61
Beecher-Dunbar-Pembine	262	1.18	Durand	978	3.33
Belmont Community	364	3.57	Edgar	663	8.14
Benton	242	7.49	Elcho	375	1.16
Big Foot Uhs	530	7.00	Eleva-Strum	616	4.93
Birchwood	253	1.30	Elkhart Lake-Glenbeulah	520	8.79
Black Hawk	393	2.93	Elmwood	330	3.48
Blair-Taylor	627	3.52	Erin #2	237	9.93
Bonduel	880	5.79	Fall Creek	813	7.74
Boscobel Area	836	4.76	Fall River	545	11.21
Bowler	435	3.28	Fennimore Community	758	5.12
Boyceville Community	755	4.73	Flambeau	623	2.02
Brighton #1	121	3.59	Florence	482	0.97
Bruce	560	2.07	Frederic	513	3.38
Butternut	192	0.83	Gibraltar Area	575	4.13
Cadott Community	876	5.77	Gillett	604	5.45
Cambria-Friesland	394	4.73	Gilman	410	1.22
Cashton	569	4.82	Gilmanton	180	1.89
Cassville	215	2.15	Glenwood City	760	6.61
Chequamegon	761	1.03	Goodman-Armstrong	116	0.73
Clayton	377	6.56	Granton Area	243	3.28
Clear Lake	626	5.81	Grantsburg	858	3.23
Cochrane-Fountain City	686	3.94	Green Lake	275	8.71
Colby	983	5.96	Greenwood	418	2.78

ATTACHMENT (continued)

**School Districts With Fewer Than 12 Pupils Per Square Mile and
Membership of Less than 1,000 Pupils**

<u>District</u>	<u>Pupils per Membership Sq. Mile</u>		<u>District</u>	<u>Pupils per Membership Sq. Mile</u>	
Gresham	297	5.30	Necedah Area	705	2.98
Herman #22	68	1.91	Neosho J3	207	6.60
Highland	301	4.17	New Auburn	298	3.39
Hilbert	460	6.88	New Glarus	890	11.20
Hillsboro	502	3.57	New Lisbon	639	5.61
Hurley	636	1.32	Niagara	390	5.47
Hustisford	450	8.55	North Cape	209	11.00
Independence	365	3.75	North Crawford	463	3.11
Iola-Scandinavia	713	5.34	North Lakeland	147	0.55
Iowa-Grant	746	4.57	Northwood	394	0.94
Ithaca	337	3.82	Norwalk-Ontario-Wilton	713	4.74
Juda	261	4.77	Norway J7	81	6.75
Kewaunee	967	7.50	Oakfield	507	8.13
Kickapoo Area	470	3.18	Osseo-Fairchild	976	3.34
Lac Du Flambeau #1	534	4.18	Owen-Withee	526	3.32
Ladysmith-Hawkins	873	4.56	Pardeeville Area	889	9.65
Lafarge	261	3.74	Paris J1	171	4.62
Lake Holcombe	338	1.85	Parkview	899	7.23
Lakeland UHS	702	0.94	Pecatonica Area	433	3.84
Lancaster Community	922	6.46	Pepin Area	244	2.64
Laona	212	0.88	Phelps	147	1.36
Lena	419	4.78	Phillips	821	1.38
Linn J4	121	7.80	Pittsville	610	1.68
Linn J6	100	5.96	Plum City	280	3.41
Loyal	562	4.96	Port Edwards	414	6.74
Luck	484	4.41	Potosi	331	4.21
Manawa	755	6.84	Prairie Farm	345	3.90
Marathon City	649	6.20	Prentice	456	1.09
Marion	507	3.99	Princeton	404	4.53
Markesan	848	4.43	Randolph	521	8.55
Mellen	286	1.42	Random Lake	934	10.25
Melrose-Mindoro	813	4.19	Raymond #14	330	10.77
Menominee Indian	916	2.49	Reedsville	675	6.00
Mercer	138	0.75	Rib Lake	486	1.72
Mineral Point	753	5.61	Rio Community	494	6.52
Minocqua J1	592	2.37	River Ridge	502	2.29
Mishicot	833	8.18	Riverdale	717	3.62
Mondovi	968	5.20	Rosendale-Brandon	969	7.63
Montello	731	4.12	Rosholt	567	3.67
Monticello	385	6.07	Royall	663	5.62

ATTACHMENT (continued)

**School Districts With Fewer Than 12 Pupils Per Square Mile and
Membership of Less than 1,000 Pupils**

<u>District</u>	<u>Pupils per Membership Sq. Mile</u>		<u>District</u>	<u>Pupils per Membership Sq. Mile</u>	
Rubicon J6	97	6.99	Turtle Lake	476	4.21
Seneca	298	2.50	Union Grove Uhs	746	8.72
Sevastopol	554	4.72	Valders	995	8.55
Shell Lake	635	4.07	Wabeno Area	416	1.27
Shiocton	757	7.01	Washburn	535	2.87
Shullsburg	383	3.97	Washington	57	2.23
Siren	476	4.32	Waterloo	899	10.44
Solon Springs	289	1.82	Wausaukee	521	1.24
South Shore	186	0.64	Wauzeka-Steuben	295	3.09
Southwestern Wisconsin	587	9.77	Webster	690	1.41
Spencer	829	10.29	Weston	313	3.14
Spring Valley	716	6.37	Weyauwega-Fremont	904	5.81
Stockbridge	239	3.88	White Lake	195	0.96
Stratford	934	8.05	Whitehall	771	5.61
Suring	428	1.36	Wild Rose	581	4.02
Thorp	562	3.54	Winter	321	0.49
Three Lakes	529	1.74	Wisconsin Heights	787	7.53
Tigerton	255	2.63	Wonewoc-Union Center	370	3.89
Tomorrow River	962	9.62	Woodruff J1	443	4.15
Tri-County Area	648	2.96	Yorkville J2	337	11.42



TO: Assembly Committee on Mining and Rural Development
Representative Kulp, Chair

FROM: Jeremy Levin, MHA, Director of Advocacy

DATE: February 4, 2016

RE: SUPPORT Rural Wisconsin Initiative

The Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative (RWHC), owned and operated by forty rural community hospitals, thanks you for this opportunity to share our thoughts on the seven bills that comprise the Rural Wisconsin Initiative. RWHC thanks the 21 lawmakers who have authored this effort.

RWHC has long supported cross-sector collaboration and realizes the need to improve more than just community health status, and that is why we wholeheartedly support the Rural Wisconsin Initiative. Some of our member hospitals have taken to community initiatives aimed at retaining a younger workforce by collaborating with high schools and tech schools to make sure students will have the skills needed to match the jobs available and other members have worked with employers in the area to make sure there is adequate child care available to entice young families to their communities and the jobs available.

AB793

Attracting and retaining good teachers is a challenge for rural schools. Health care has faced similar workforce challenges and one tool to attract health care workers have been loan forgiveness programs; these should be tried to attract new teachers, too. Such a program could help new teachers decide where to settle and where to teach, just as health care loan forgiveness programs are tied to practice. It would also encourage students interested in teaching to come back to their hometowns after their educations are complete, rural health education programs, such as the Wisconsin Academy Rural Medicine, seek a rural background to also gauge chance to practice in rural areas.

AB794

This bill requires the Higher Educational Aids Board to make student loan reimbursement payments on behalf of rural county residents. These "rural opportunity zones" will look to incentivize young people looking to relocate after finishing their post-secondary education. Currently, the demographics of rural areas skew older than more urban and suburban areas in the state; likewise, rural health care providers reflect these demographics and as they retire, good health care jobs will be available.

AB795

RWHC believes that the \$500,000 increase in Youth Apprenticeship program is another valuable tool for students. The program is designed for high school students who want hands-on learning in an occupational area



with classroom instruction. The funds go to rural schools, tech colleges and businesses that are working together to equip students with the skills they will need to succeed in their local industries.

AB796

The increase in the Apprenticeship Completion Award program, which partially reimburses eligible apprentices, sponsors and employers for certain costs of related instruction, will continue to support “on the job” training. Health care has had a long history in apprenticeship learning across different health provider professionals. This can support other health care focused entities like the Wisconsin Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) that seeks to improve access to quality health care by developing community-based health professions training programs and enhancing health education resources across the state by allowing students to experience firsthand the challenges, opportunities and rewards of health professions.

AB797

This bill supports the Wisconsin Rural Physician Residency Assistance Program (WRPRAP), which has successfully drawn physicians to rural communities. In 2011, RWHC Proposed the Wisconsin Rural Training Track Collaborative to the WRPRAP for start-up funding. In just three years these funds have made it possible to grow from the Collaborative’s initial eight organizations interested in developing and sustaining rural graduate medical education (GME) funding, to 28 hospitals, clinics, and residencies investigating and developing rural GME, and that number is growing. The new bill would propose an increase of WRPRAP funding by \$250,000, to strengthen residency programs for doctors pursuing obstetrics and gynecology specialties.

AB798

We support enhanced funding for rural broadband expansion grants. In 2007, RWHC Information Technology Network (ITN) incorporated as a 501(c)3 organization dedicated to providing member hospitals with shared health information services. In 2013, RWHC ITN became one of the first networks in the country to be designated as a Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Consortium, helping 29 hospitals and nearly 70 sites apply for broadband funding through the new FCC HCF subsidy program.

AB799

The proposed Rural STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) Grant legislation will help small school districts in rural Wisconsin communities start, expand, and maintain STEM education programs. These education programs help to shape students’ interests and prepare them to pursue the high wage, high demand careers that are involved in advanced manufacturing that can be found in rural areas.

Thank you again for this opportunity to comment on and express our support for the Rural Wisconsin Initiative. We encourage the Committee to act on these bills so that they might become law and more can be done to help rural areas and the health care providers that serve these areas of Wisconsin.