



JIM STEINEKE

MAJORITY LEADER

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 5th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

(608) 266-2401
Toll-Free: (888) 534-0005
Rep.Steineke@legis.wi.gov

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

February 3, 2016

Testimony re: Senate Bill 641; the Fox River Navigational System visitor center.

Chairman Cowles and members of the committee:

Thank you for taking this opportunity to hear Senate Bill 641, relating to the creation of a Fox River Navigational System visitors center. I appreciate your attention to this important matter facing the Fox Valley.

Senate Bill 641 is a strong, bipartisan bill that has the support of many of our area legislators surrounding the beautiful Fox River. Over the past several months, the Department of Administration, the City of Appleton, the Fox River Navigational System Authority, and other stakeholders have been engaged in preliminary negotiations to construct a visitor's center along the Fox River in Appleton. The Fox Valley is a growing region, and the corridor from Oshkosh through Appleton to Green Bay is an increasingly popular tourist destination.

This proposed visitor's center will service the needs of the community, with access from vehicles adjacent to the Fox River. Because of the proposed site's proximity to this waterway, the land needed for the center's creation is currently owned by the state. In order for the proposed plans to continue, the Fox River Navigational System Authority must be able to lease the land to construct, operate, and maintain the visitor's center. This simple piece of legislation authorizes the Department of Administration to sell the parcel of land to the city of Appleton for this purpose.

Again, I appreciate the Committee's prompt attention to this legislation. I also want to thank the countless volunteers and area legislators, some of who join us today, for their work and planning to make this important tourist attraction a reality.