

March 2, 2000

**Senate Bill 306** (Jauch/Kreibich)

Establishment of a geographic education fund.

**Summary of Bill -**

The bill would provide \$500,000 GPR in 2001-01 in a separate appropriation for the Wisconsin geographical education fund to enhance instruction in geography to students statewide. Passage of the bill would ensure a matching grant of \$500,000 from the National Geographic Society.

**Staff Comments -**

Obviously, this is a great idea and has the support of many educators across the state. Hopefully, Rep. Gard and other Republican members will recognize the merits of the program and vote for it.

**Standing Committee Action -**

The Senate Education Committee recommended passage of SB 306 as amended by SA 1 on a vote of 10 to 1. SA 1 provides that the current \$50,000 GPR grant made to the Wisconsin Geography Alliance each year for geography instruction be discontinued as of June 30, 2001. Also, it specifies that grants be awarded only after consultation with a group identified by DPI and that the group include one employee of the Department.

**Recommended JFC Action -**

Adopt SA 1 to SB 306.  
Passage of SB 306 as amended.

Prepared by: Julie



## Legislative Fiscal Bureau

One East Main, Suite 301 • Madison, WI 53703 • (608) 266-3847 • Fax: (608) 267-6873

March 2, 2000

TO: Members  
Joint Committee on Finance

FROM: Bob Lang, Director

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 306: Geographical Education Fund

Senate Bill 306 was introduced on December 15, 1999, and referred to the Senate Committee on Education. On February 16, 2000, that Committee recommended passage of Senate Bill 306, as amended by Senate Amendment 1, on a vote of 10 to 1.

### BACKGROUND

Under current law, \$50,000 GPR annually is provided under the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to the Wisconsin Geography Alliance. The Alliance is part of a national program created by the National Geographic Society to enhance instruction in geography and social studies through curriculum development and teacher professional development. The National Geographical Society provides \$50,000 annually to each state that provides \$50,000 annually in matching funds.

### SUMMARY OF BILL

Senate Bill 306 would provide \$500,000 GPR in 2000-01 in a separate appropriation for the Wisconsin geographical education fund. The bill would provide that no monies may be encumbered under the appropriation after June 30, 2001. Under the bill, DPI would be required to enter into an agreement with the National Geographical Society Education Foundation (Foundation) to establish the fund. The bill would require that the agreement include all of the following: (a) that the Foundation manage the fund; (b) that DPI award an initial grant of \$500,000 to the fund to be matched by a grant from the National Geographical Society; (c) that income and appreciation from the fund be used to award grants and support programs to improve geographical education in

Wisconsin; (d) that the Foundation annually submit to DPI an audited financial statement of the fund prepared by an independent auditor and a report listing the names of grant recipients and the amounts and purposes of the awards and other expenditures made from the fund; and (e) that if the fund is dissolved, the Foundation must return to DPI the original grant and any accumulated and unexpended income.

### **SENATE AMENDMENT 1**

Senate Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 306 would provide that that no moneys may be encumbered under the current law Wisconsin geography alliance appropriation of \$50,000 GPR annually after June 30, 2001. In addition, the amendment would require the Foundation to award grants in consultation with a group identified by DPI that would include at least one employe of Department.

### **FISCAL EFFECT**

Under SB 306, as amended by SA 1, \$500,000 GPR in 2000-01 would be provided under a new DPI appropriation to establish a Wisconsin geographical education fund. The bill would prohibit the encumbrance of any funds from the appropriation after June 30, 2001. In addition, the amendment would prohibit the encumbrance of any funds from the appropriation that currently funds the Wisconsin Geography Alliance after June 30, 2001. As a result, the fiscal effect of the bill if enacted would be to increase, on a one-time basis, DPI's expenditures by \$500,000 GPR in 2000-01. Starting in 2001-02, DPI's expenditures would be reduced by \$50,000 GPR annually to reflect the discontinuation of current funding for the Wisconsin Geography Alliance.

Prepared by: Tricia Collins