



PATRICK TESTIN

STATE SENATOR

DATE: June 15, 2021

RE: **Testimony on Senate Bill 231**

TO: The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development

FROM: Senator Patrick Testin

I'd like to begin by thanking Chairman Feyen both for holding a hearing on Senate Bill 231 (SB 231) and for being a co-author of the bill.

Wisconsin's Youth Apprenticeship (YA) program has helped high school juniors and seniors from across Wisconsin since its inception in 1991. Through this program, students are able to pursue their diploma while getting hands on training with a local employer in one of eleven different career clusters. Students are able to put their passion to work and see first-hand the opportunities that are available in their communities.

While the YA program has grown, it remains unknown to far too many. SB 231 will increase awareness of the opportunities that come from YA by adding the program to the list of educational options that must be provided to parents of high school students.

I think that this bill is particularly important to rural districts, like the one that I represent. For years, we've been fighting the false perception that insists that opportunity only exists in urban areas. Increased awareness of local career opportunities will help us retain talented young people and will contribute to the stability and prosperity of our communities.

Thank you for your attention to this testimony, and I ask that you join me in supporting SB 231.

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LOREN OLDENBURG

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 96th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Senate Bill 231

Relating to: providing information about educational options offered in a school district

Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development

June 15, 2021

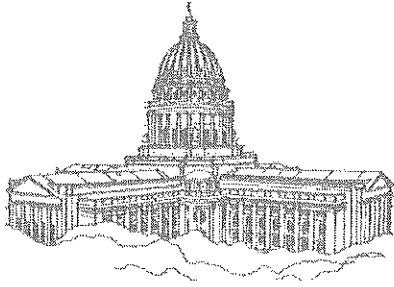
Good afternoon, Chairman Feyen and committee members. I want to thank you for your willingness to hear Senate Bill 231.

Last session it was my honor to work with members of the Assembly, Senate and my local CESA's to increase the funding for Wisconsin's Youth Apprenticeship Program. This increase was needed so that we could meet the demand of the students who wanted to participate in the Youth Apprenticeship program.

The Youth Apprenticeship program in Wisconsin is continuing to grow. It is so important that we allow high school students to have access to this hands-on career experience. Senate Bill 231 requires each school district to provide information about the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development's Youth Apprenticeship Program. The information about the Youth Apprenticeship program will be provided in the packet of information that school districts are already required to provide students who attend their school.

Senate Bill 231 is an easy way to be sure that high school students of Wisconsin are aware that the Youth Apprenticeship program can offer them hands-on career experience. This bill was written with an exception: only schools or school boards that operate a high school are required to provide the information on the Youth Apprenticeship program to their students.

Thank you again for hearing Senate Bill 231, a simple bill that will allow more students to be made aware of the Youth Apprenticeship program.



LENA C. TAYLOR

Wisconsin State Senator • 4th District

HERE TO SERVE YOU!

Senator Lena Taylor's Written Testimony
Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development
Public Hearing SB 231
June 15, 2021

Chairman Feyen, Vice-Chair Testin and members of the Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development thank you for today's public hearing on SB 231, regarding providing information about educational options offered in a school district.

SB 231 is a bill about options, empowerment and additional information intended to assist parents and students in making the best decisions for the student's needs. Currently, we require schools to provide a report card regarding their performance and a list of educational options for students. However in reviewing those options, we realize that a major opportunity for students, and quite frankly, employers in the state, was not included in the list: the youth apprenticeship program administered by the Department of Workforce Development.

Our state needs a well-trained workforce to help address current employer needs and to fill the jobs of the future. Apprenticeships are critical to our success and enables to tap into a resource of well-trained and skilled labor, as we continue to make up lost ground from the devastating impact of COVID-19. Youth apprenticeships integrate school and work based learning to prepare students in employability and occupational skills as defined by Wisconsin industries.

We know, from both the vast professional and employment experiences even of our colleagues, that education and interests are not suited to a "one size fits all" approach. Over the years, I have worked to create and introduce apprenticeship options in my district, for area youth. I am extremely proud of the work done with local collaborators to create the Northcott Neighborhood House & Love and Faith Urban Arborist Pre-Apprenticeship Program.

We have introduced urban high school students and recent graduates to forestry and employment opportunities in an industry that they never imagined for themselves. Graduates of the pre-apprenticeship program have not only secured well-paying jobs, but are highly sought after because of the unique set of skills they have acquired.

We need to give every one of our students everything we can to help them succeed. Apprenticeships are a tool and pathway to family supporting careers. Understanding that there are over 200 occupations and more than 2500 employers constantly in need of skilled workers, SB 231 creates access to information to position students to compete for these jobs. I encourage your support of Wisconsin students, Wisconsin Business and SB 231. Thank you.