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Details:

(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ... PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

2009-10

(session year)

Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on ... Education (SC-Ed)

COMMITTEE NOTICES ...

- Committee Reports ... **CR**
- Executive Sessions ... **ES**
- Public Hearings ... **PH**

INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

- Appointments ... **Appt** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Clearinghouse Rules ... **CRule** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
(**ab** = Assembly Bill) (**ar** = Assembly Resolution) (**ajr** = Assembly Joint Resolution)
(**sb** = Senate Bill) (**sr** = Senate Resolution) (**sjr** = Senate Joint Resolution)
- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**

* Contents organized for archiving by: Gigi Godwin (LRB) (August/2011)

Senate

Record of Committee Proceedings

Committee on Education

Senate Bill 109

Relating to: commencement of the school term in public schools.

By Senators Lehman, Taylor, Lazich, Miller, Risser, Vinehout and Wirch; cosponsored by Representatives Pope-Roberts, Dexter, Nass, Berceau, Black, Danou, Hebl, Hilgenberg, Hraychuck, Pasch, Sinicki, Smith, Soletski, Toles, Vruwink and Wood.

March 11, 2009 Referred to Committee on Education.

April 2, 2009 **PUBLIC HEARING HELD**

Present: (6) Senators Lehman, Jauch, Erpenbach, Hansen,
Grothman and Hopper.
Absent: (1) Senator Olsen.

Appearances For

- John Lehman, Racine — Sen., 21st Senate District
- SONDY POPE-ROBERTS, Middleton — Rep., 79th Assembly District
- Barb Van Deirzen, West De Pere — West De Pere School District
- John Zegers, De Pere — West De Pere School District
- Mike Richie, Eagle River — Northland Pines School District
- Bob Avery, Dane — School District of Somerset
- Michelle Schaefer, Rib Mountain — Wausau School District
- Sara McNamara, Lancaster — Lancaster Community Schools
- Thomas Hughey, Lancaster — Lancaster Community Schools
- Greg Stewart, Whitewater — WEAC

Appearances Against

- Jim Holperin, Conover — Sen., 12th Senate District
- Ed Lump, Madison — Wisconsin Restaurant Association
- Tom Diehl, Wisconsin Dells — Tommy Bartlett Corp.
- Mary Rawley, Green Lake — Goose Blind Restaurant
- Todd Winkler, Middleton — Wisconsin Hotel Group
- Eric Rottier, Madison — The North Central Group
- Julie Noskowiak, Sun Prairie
- Lisa Blair, Sun Prairie

- Michael Schmal, Fond du Lac — Fond du Lac Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Jean Winkler, Fond du Lac — WISCO Hotel Group
- Kathi Kilgore, Madison — Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners
- Dave Schneider, Pardeeville — Indian Trails Campground
- Dave Blank, Sturtevant — Wisconsin Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus
- Trisha Pugal, Brookfield — Wisconsin Innkeepers Association
- Joe Klimczak, Blue Mounds — Cave of the Mounds
- Chet Gerlach, Madison — Association of Wisconsin Tourism Attractions

Appearances for Information Only

- Kelli Trumble, Madison — Sec., Wisconsin Department of Tourism

Registrations For

- Joe Quick, Madison — Madison Metropolitan School District
- Scott Spector, Madison — AFT-Wisconsin
- Donna Haugen, Monticello
- Sheri Krause, Madison — Wisconsin Association of School Boards
- Jim Holperin, Conover — Sen., 12th Senate District
- Chris Thiel, Milwaukee — Milwaukee Public Schools

Registrations Against

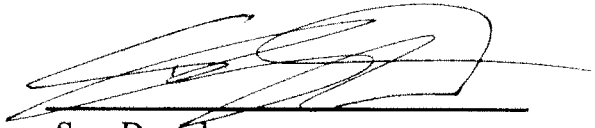
- Deb Archer, Madison — Greater Madison Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Janet Swandby, Madison — Outdoor Advertising Association of Wisconsin
- Pam Christensen, Madison — Wisconsin Petroleum Marketers and C-Store Association
- Michelle Kussow, Madison — Wisconsin Grocers Association
- Bill Smith, Madison — National Federation of Independent Business
- Julia Hertel, Sun Prairie — Wisconsin Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus
- Jason Johns, Madison — National Association of Theater Owners

Registrations for Information Only

- None.

April 22, 2010

Failed to pass pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution 1.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sara Dauscher', written over a solid horizontal line.

Sara Dauscher
Committee Clerk

ALPINE

RECEIVED
MAR 30 2009

Resort • Golf • ~~The Hof Restaurant~~

On the Shore in Door County

March 26, 2009

Senator John Lehman
310 South Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin 53708

*better
not go
there*

Dear Senator Lehman;

We are writing you to let you know of our opposition to SB 109 which would repeal the September 1st school start date in the state of Wisconsin.

Our family owns and manages the Alpine Resort and Golf Course, a seasonal resort located in Door County. We open our golf course in early May and our resort for the Memorial Day Weekend. Our operation is closed by mid-October. Needless to say our season is very short, our most profitable months being July and August.

Over the years, we've noticed a trend in which occupancy in August starts to decline after the first two weeks. When the State of Wisconsin mandated a September 1st school start date a few years back, we experienced a significant increase in business the last two weeks of August. This increased not only our occupancy and golf business but affected all of Door County, allowing us to maintain our full workforce (primarily college students) until the Labor Day weekend.

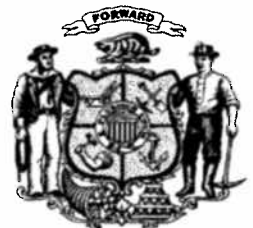
I ask you to strongly consider objecting to SB109. Tourism in Door County and other summer destinations will be negatively affected by the passing of this legislation.

Sincerely,

Cindy Bertschinger Livingston *Emily Bertschinger Pitchford*
Cindy Bertschinger Livingston
Emily Bertschinger Pitchford, Mgrs
The Alpine Resort and Golf Course



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Douglas Happel, Associate Superintendent/Human Resources

lacrosseschools.org

Hogan Administrative Center
807 East Avenue South, La Crosse, WI 54601
608.789.7649 • Fax: 608.789.7676

SB 109?

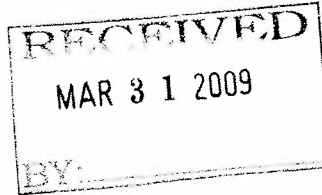
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
LA CROSSE



March 30, 2009

Senator John Lehman
State Capitol
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882

Representative Sondy Pope-Roberts
State Capitol
P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708-8953



Janet Kislinger, Administrative Assistant
jkisling@sd lax.k12.wi.us • 608.789.7623

Susan Schultz, Administrative Assistant
sschultz@sd lax.k12.wi.us • 608.789.7649

Candace Pearce
Benefits Administrative Assistant
cpearce@sd lax.k12.wi.us • 608.789.7640

SARA

Dear Senator Lehman and Representative Pope-Roberts:

I'm writing this letter in support of change to the statute in order to allow school districts to begin their school years prior to September 1st. The School District of La Crosse, before the existence of the present legislation, began its school year approximately one week prior to Labor Day and concluded approximately one week after Memorial Day. This worked well. Under the present September 1st legislation it has become increasingly difficult to develop our calendars and this year, given typical Wisconsin weather, our school year will not finish until June 12, 2009.

In writing this letter I believe that I can speak not only for the School District of La Crosse but also our parents and, I might add that in developing our calendar in negotiations with the La Crosse Education Association, we have always involved representatives from the La Crosse District-Wide Parent Committee.

I apologize for not attending the April 2, 2009, hearing on this legislation but I do request that you take this letter under advisement.

Sincerely,

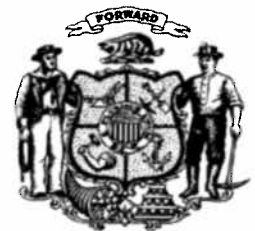

Doug Happel
Associate Superintendent/Human Resources

DH/ss

cc: Senator Dan Kapanke
Rep. Jennifer Schilling
Rep. Michael Huebsch
Jerry Kember
Randy Nelson
Janet Rosseter
Board of Education



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





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Fax# 262/782-0550

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www.wisconsinlodging.info



April 2, 2009

To: Senate Committee on Education
Senator John Lehman, Chairman

From: Trisha Pugal, CAE
President, CEO

RE: Opposition to SB 109 Repeal of the School Start Date

On behalf of the almost 1,000 hotels, motels, resorts, inns, bed & breakfasts, and other public lodging properties in our membership, the Wisconsin Innkeepers Association (WIA) respectfully asks you to oppose SB 109, which would repeal the no earlier than September 1 School Start Date for K-12 Public Schools.

We ask you to consider the following points:

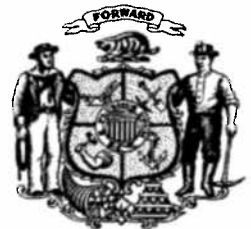
- There is no evidence that starting schools September 1 or later directly harms the educational experience our students receive around the state.
- It is a fact that the tourism industry, one of the three largest industries in our state, would experience a loss in business should schools start earlier than September 1st.
- It is also a fact that the lodging industry in our state is already experiencing a loss in business with current economic conditions. We cannot afford to lose more.
- The lodging industry generates more than \$74 million in sales tax revenue for the state, based on 2006 figures.
- The impact on state sales tax revenue from losses that would occur with earlier start dates would be a reduction in state revenue, which is also utilized to support our public schools.
- At a time when schools are looking for more revenue, when businesses cannot afford to lose any more revenue to stay afloat, and when the state desperately needs to retain sales tax revenue to fund important needs such as education, this proposal does not make sense.
- In early March in the state of Iowa, their House Education Committee, by a 2 to 1 majority vote across party lines, approved establishing a later school start date, noting that by helping the tourism industry in their state they would be helping their state economy.

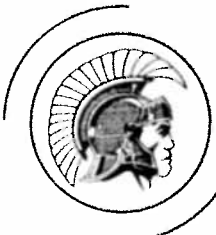
Please vote to oppose SB 109.

CC: WIA Executive Committee, Kathi Kilgore



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





Somerset School District • P.O. Box 100 • Somerset, Wisconsin 54025

Robert Avery, Business Manager • 715-247-3313 • FAX: 715-247-5588 • ravery@somerset.k12.wi.us

2 April 2009

Honorable Senator John Lehman and Members of the Senate Education Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you this afternoon regarding Senate Bill 109, proposed legislation to repeal the mandated start date for public schools on or after September 1. My name is Robert (Bob) Avery, Business Manager for the School District of Somerset. I am here on behalf of our district administrator, Randy Rosburg, to represent the district today.

The School District of Somerset joins the Wisconsin Association of School Boards, the School Administrators Alliance and school districts across the state in supporting this proposed measure. There are several reasons for our taking this position, which can be summarized as a pedagogical interest; serving the needs of students and families in our community; and local control.

Pedagogical Interest:

The arbitrary and capricious establishment of September 1 as the soonest date that public schools could begin educating students each fall was made without regard for the pedagogical interests of providing the highest level of educational services to students. Rather, the date for starting school was made on behalf of commercial interests with a desire to keep working-age students available for employment as long as possible during the state's tourism season. While we understand the desirability of maximizing the availability of the workforce for one of the state's key industries, we disagree with using the school calendar to accomplish that end independent of consideration on education services.

In addition, schools currently begin fall extracurricular activities well before September 1. All sports have been holding practices for a couple of weeks. Some sports will have already had a competition event before September 1. Athletic events, in addition to providing a competitive arena for student athletes are also community and social events for students. Holding these events before school begins is counterintuitive.

Parent/Student Friendly:

Relatedly, there is plenty of anecdotal evidence regarding the desirability of an August start date on behalf of students and parents. As an employee of school districts for nearly twelve years, I have witnessed countless students and parents who were ready for school to start in August. Students are "bored" and ready to return to the social environment, if not the classrooms themselves, of schools. As a parent, I can attest to this firsthand.

The implementation of the current statute has negatively impacted students and families. In addition to pushing the return of school back into September, while still requiring 180 contact days, the current statute constricts winter and spring breaks and routinely results in the school year extending into mid-June. This year, the School District of Somerset will be holding classes on June 15th. Ironically, while

"Learning Today to Succeed Tomorrow"

student aged workers are available for employment in the hospitality industry through the end of August, near the traditional end of tourism season Labor Day weekend, they now are not available near its beginning, traditionally on Memorial Day weekend in late May. An early start of the school year leads directly to an earlier end.

In addition to pushing the end of the school year back into June, the September 1 start date statute has resulted in condensed winter breaks and even has impacted spring breaks. Whereas families could count on two weeks at winter break to plan vacations and family travel for the holidays around, current breaks are condensed to a period as short as nine days (including weekends). One calendar proposal put on the table this year in our district included having classes during the 2009-2010 school year between the Christmas and New Years holidays! (Ultimately that proposal was rejected, but it demonstrates how hard it is to squeeze 180 contact days into a period of time starting on September 1 and trying to end as soon as practical in June.

This is compounded on years when September 1 falls on a weekend, which effectively pushes the start date to as far back as September 4.

Local Control:

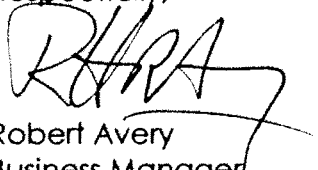
School boards in the state of Wisconsin are, in theory, provide local control in policy making and management of local governmental agencies (school districts). While this authority is significantly modified by a variety of governing state statutes and regulations, the establishment of school calendars clearly should not be one of those areas where the state limits the authority of the local governing body, the school board.

Further, school calendars are mandatory subjects of bargaining with teachers' unions under the state's collective bargaining statutes. As such, this area should remain with those actors, local school boards and teachers' unions, to determine what best meets needs of the local community.

In conclusion, the School District of Somerset supports Senate Bill 109 and encourages the Legislature to act to forward this bill to the Governor for his signature.

Thank you again for you time and consideration of my comments this afternoon. Are there any questions?

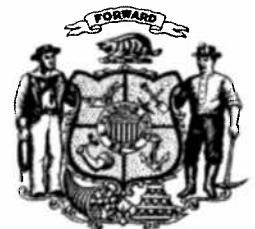
Respectfully,



Robert Avery
Business Manager
School District of Somerset



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



BOARD OF EDUCATION

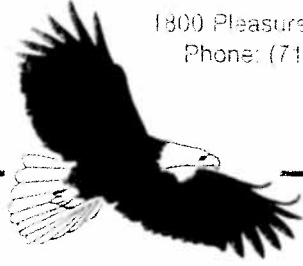
Tom Christensen, President
Tim Gaffney, Vice President
Jim Mulleady, Treasurer
Carolyn Ritter, Clerk
Mike Jovanovic, Deputy Clerk
Jerry Sparks, Member
Mike Sealander, Member

Northland Pines School District

1800 Pleasure Island Road • Eagle River, WI 54521
Phone: (715) 479-6487 • Fax: (715) 479-7633
www.npsd.k12.wi.us

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Mike Richie, District Administrator
Margaret M. Smith, Business Manager
Scott Foster, Director of Instruction,
Technology and Assessment



April 2, 2009

Testimony on Repeal of September 1st Start Date Law SENATE BILL 109

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak regarding Senate Bill 109. My name is Mike Richie, District Administrator for the Northland Pines School District. I would like to go on record as does the Northland Pines School Board to repeal the September 1st Start Date law.

The Northland Pines School District is located in the Eagle River area in northern Wisconsin, Vilas County, and is considered a high tourist area.

Vilas County is the home of the World's largest inland chain of 28 lakes and has the world's highest concentration of inland freshwater lakes, including over 1,300 lakes and 73 rivers and streams, great for fishing and leisure activities. There are over 500,000 acres of public forest lands open for hiking, biking, hunting, scenic driving or wildlife watching adventure. Eagle River is also billed as the Snowmobile Capital of the World.

I would like to emphasize the following points as our rationale for repealing the start date law:

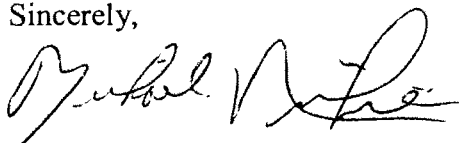
- I, along with my school board, strongly believe school districts should have the authority and local control as to setting their school calendars. We believe that every district is unique and although it may work better for some districts to start on or after September 1st, it may work better for some districts to start before September 1st. Again, the school board would like to emphasize local control for this decision.
- The intent of this law was good when it was implemented seven years ago with the thought that it would boost our economy, specifically with tourism dollars in late August, if all schools were forced to start on September 1st or after. Four of my seven board members own businesses related to the tourism industry; they along with the other three board members are **strongly** in favor of repealing this law. The four board members specifically involved in the tourism industry include an owner of a real estate company, the owner of a lakefront property resort, the owner of a sport marine which specifically deals with the selling and renting of boats, wave runners and snowmobiles, and the owner of a specialty meat shop. The consensus of these individuals since the beginning of the September 1st start date law is that they have **lost** revenues during the first two weeks of June because most Wisconsin schools are still in session the first two weeks of June. They have not seen any change or increase in revenues or tourists coming to our area in late August since the September 1st start date was enacted. This law has actually hurt specific tourism businesses in Vilas County because of a decline of tourists in early June as children are still in school.

- Owners of lakefront properties report that our lakes are more attractive in early June versus late August because the water levels are normally higher and they look better as compared to late August when the weeds and algae set in to many of our lakes.
- By the second week of August, all high school activities in Wisconsin have started. This includes but is not limited to football, soccer, cross country, golf, band, as well as other activities. Due to these student activities, families are **not** taking family vacations after the second week in August. The WIAA has not adjusted any of their sports schedules to accommodate the September 1st start date. This has made it very difficult on many families across the state. Due to the fact that we can't start school until September 1st, we have two football games before we even start school.
- Looking back at the last seven years, we have normally had our last day of school at the end of the second week in June; however, as we incur snow days the possibility exists to push the school year into the third week of June.
- Looking at what is best for students educationally, they are much more motivated and eager to learn in the middle to the end of August versus the beginning and middle of June. The instructional days in the month of June are not good for students academically and it is very difficult for the teachers to hold students' attention span. I believe that education and learning suffer drastically with this law because we are forced to attempt to educate our students well into June.
- Another issue with the September 1st start date is due to late ending of school it causes many conflicts including but not limited to summer student college visits, youth camps, jobs for students, and teachers trying to take continuing education courses.

In closing, I would like to emphasize again that the Northland Pines School District Board of Education and District Administrator unanimously support the repealing of the September 1st start date law and we would like to see local control on the School Calendar. Please remember this is coming from a school district that is in an area considered to be a major tourism destination.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify in front of you today.

Sincerely,

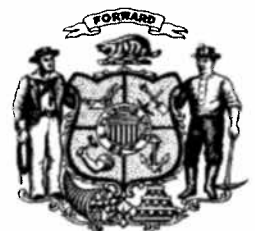


Dr. Michael Richie
District Administrator

Cc: Northland Pines Board of Education
Northland Pines Administration
Northland Pines Education Association



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Department of Tourism Secretary Kelli A. Trumble
Senate Education Committee Hearing – SB 109
April 2, 2009

Good afternoon Chairman Lehman, Vice Chair Jauch, and distinguished Senators Erpenbach, Hansen, Hopper, Grothman, and Olsen. Thank you for this opportunity to address this important committee on the uniform school start legislation. As the Secretary of Tourism, I'd like to present the background information and history to the Committee.

1. The uniform school start date is the single most important issue to the Wisconsin Tourism Industry.
2. In 1985, the Tourism Industry was successful in getting legislation passed that allowed a uniform September 1 date for the University System. Over the past 24 years there has been absolutely no problem associated with this calendar.
3. In 2001, the legislature passed a uniform September 1 start date for K-12. The only negative issue that our industry has heard concerning the uniform start date has been the local control issue. The state legislation only controls the uniform start date. The local school district controls the entire 180-day school calendar.
4. The uniform school start date is pro-education, pro-family and pro-tourism.

Pro-Education:

- The tourism industry supports and needs an educated Wisconsin workforce.
- We work hand-in-glove with the school systems and Workforce Development.

Pro-Family:

- In our fast-paced, pressure-packed, 24/7 world, vacation getaways are now more important than ever. They provide an opportunity to re-energize so we can return to our lives refreshed.
- Fortunately, Americans feel that vacations are a birthright. They will plan and save to ensure that they have quality time with their family.
- The economy has an effect on where families plan to take their vacations and they're working hard not to cancel planned vacations. Often families opt for a closer destination, a shorter trip or search for a destination that provides greater value for their dollar.

Pro-Tourism:

- Wisconsin is well positioned to respond to this.
- Families can travel together as K-12 and university systems are identical in calendars.
- The summer season is the most productive portion of the tourism business cycle and drives the greatest revenue to Wisconsin's economy.

Department of Tourism Secretary Kelli A. Trumble
Senate Education Committee Hearing – SB 109
April 2, 2009
Page 2

5. The Department of Tourism invests \$10 million in marketing travel in Wisconsin; 36% of that is invested solely in summer months.
6. The 2007 Davidson-Peterson Economic Impact Research, commissioned by the Department of Tourism, shows that traveler spending drives nearly \$13 billion to the state's economy. Summer continues to be Wisconsin's top tourism season with travelers spending \$4.9 billion. In the last 2 years, over \$300 million more is spent in August than June. Important revenue for the state's economy.
7. Our major competitors – the public school systems in Michigan, Minnesota and Chicago -- all start school after Labor Day. Therefore, they have a competitive edge on those places where schools start prior to September 1.
8. Our commitment to the balance of excellent education and a strong tourism economy is critical to Wisconsin.

Thank you Chairman Lehman and the entire committee for giving me the opportunity to speak on this important issue.

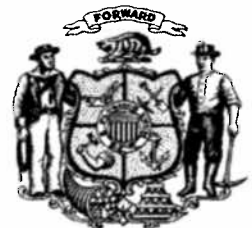
WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM
travelwisconsin.com

Shelly Allness
Executive Staff Assistant

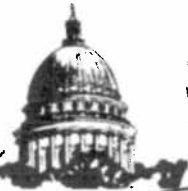
201 West Washington Avenue
P.O. Box 8690
Madison, WI 53708-8690
Phone: 608/266-2345
FAX: 608/266-3403
mallness@travelwisconsin.com



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



private
school
transport



SONDY POPE-ROBERTS

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Lancaster
NOV end of
1st Q.

Deben 30-40%
Co-curricular in August

MI. + MN = Sept 1

Chicago = Sept 1

April 2, 2009

Members of the Senate Committee on Education

I would like to thank you, Chairman Lehman, for scheduling a hearing today on Senate Bill 109. I appreciate the committee's dedication to this important issue.

Senate Bill 109 and its companion, Assembly Bill 125, were drafted to address concerns that I have been hearing over the last ten years, as a legislator and an education advocate, about Wisconsin's school start date law. Under current law, a school district is prohibited from starting the calendar year until September 1. The legislation before you today will eliminate the September 1 start date and return control of the start date to local school boards.

The start date requirement was passed into law through the 1999-2001 biennial budget bill. Initially, school boards were presented with the option of enacting a resolution at the local level that allowed them to start their school year before September 1. Through the passage of the 2001-2003 budget, however, this option was taken off the table and our current waiver system, run by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), was put into place. The waiver program run by DPI is extremely rigid calling for "extraordinary circumstances" in order to be granted a waiver. DPI granted 34 waivers at the beginning due to calendars that had already been established. After that, only eight waivers were approved since 2003, four were for major construction, two were for transportation costs and two were related to the international baccalaureate program. This indicates to me that there is very little flexibility in the waiver program. I am told that this factor discourages districts from even bothering to ask for them.

Senate Bill 109 was drafted to provide local school boards the opportunity to start school before September 1 should support for such a start date exist within a community. It does not mandate that Wisconsin schools start before September 1. Adding flexibility to the academic calendar will allow districts to better prepare for snow days, teacher preparation days, holidays, and any other necessary non-instruction days. We must also realize that, for all intents and purposes, students who participate in extracurricular sports and activities will be starting their involvement before September 1 and will benefit greatly from this change.

This legislation has bipartisan support in addition to support from all of the major educational associations in Wisconsin. Today, you will no doubt hear testimony from members of the tourism and restaurant industry in Wisconsin explaining why a state-wide start date of September 1 is necessary from their industry's point of view. You will also hear that it already provides the flexibility schools need. I am here to tell you that that is not the case.

Pope-Roberts
SB 109
4/2//2009

I am co-authoring this bill because I have been contacted by many teachers, administrators, parents, and school board members from across the state that want this option returned to them. These are the people that are most affected by the school start date and must deal with the repercussions of that choice.

It is important to reiterate that returning this decision to the local school district does not mean that any district will be required to start before September 1st. It means that districts will once again be allowed to make that determination based on the needs of the school and the local community. This decision should be made by the educational community which it affects, not by special interests just looking out for themselves.

I would not support local school boards dictating the operating hours for any tourist attraction nor any eating establishment. Why should they be allowed to set the academic calendar?

Once again, I would like to thank Chairman Lehman and the Senate Committee on Education for scheduling a hearing on Senate Bill 109.

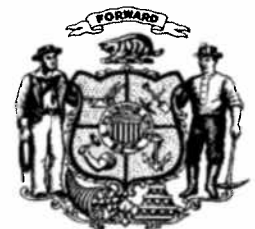
Sincerely,

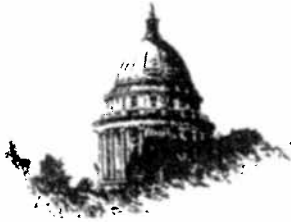
A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sondy Pope-Roberts".

Sondy Pope-Roberts
State Representative
79th Assembly District



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





Wisconsin State Senate
John Lehman
Senator – 21st District

State Capitol • PO Box 7882 • Madison, WI 53707-7882 • (608) 266-1832 • Toll-free: 1-866-615-7510

Testimony of State Sen. John Lehman
Senate Committee on Education
Senate Bill 109
April 2, 2009

Rep. Sondy Pope-Roberts and I have introduced Senate Bill 109 to return control of the school start date to local school boards.

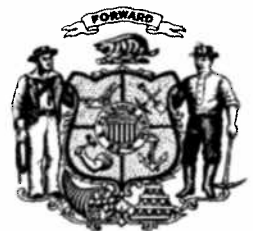
Back in 2001, Act 16 changed Wisconsin law to prohibit school districts from starting their calendar year until after September 1st. Senate Bill 109 would put the decision back into the hands of the local school board members, where it belongs. The start date would be subject to the collective bargaining process that currently sets district calendars on an annual basis.

While most of our state's 426 school districts will probably continue to begin instruction after Labor Day, this legislation will give local school boards the flexibility to address local needs. It would help to alleviate the pressure that many school districts are under to finish the statutorily required amount of school days and provide more options to deal with snow-days and other unforeseen events that require school closure. Moreover, it would allow districts to decide what calendar best fosters student achievement in their own local communities.

I understand the tourism industry has concerns about allowing schools to set their calendars to begin before September 1 and would prefer the state to retain control. But when we make decisions about K-12 education, the focus needs to stay on the children.



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Testimony to the Senate Committee on Education

Senate Bill 109 Relating to Commencement of the School Term in Public Schools

April 2, 2009

My name is Greg Stewart. I am a social studies teacher at Whitewater High School. I have taught in both the public and private schools of Wisconsin for more than 15 years, and I am writing in support of SB 109 relating to the commencement of fall classes in public school, or school start date, which would allow fall classes to begin before September 1. As an educator, I strongly believe that decisions surrounding the school start date should be based on what is in the best interest of kids and their education rather than what is in the best interest of the tourism industry.

Here are the reasons for my support and the support of so many educators:

1. **Equalizing days of instruction by semester.** The start of the school year has always been a challenge for administrators, teachers and students at Whitewater High School. As a high school teacher, equalizing the days from first to second semester is very difficult with the September 1 start. Now, because of snow make up days, second semester is sometimes five or six days longer than first semester. If a semester course or an Advanced Placement (AP) semester course is offered, a teacher may lose several days of instruction. Even if one teaches a year-round AP course, many of the tests occur in early May nationwide. If snow days are made up at the end of the school year calendar, as is normally the case, teacher and students could lose several days of instruction. That is not fair to those students in Wisconsin taking the AP test.
2. **Parent-teacher conferences.** Previously, before the September 1 start date, semester exams could be completed at the high school by the Dr. Martin Luther King holiday in mid-January; now they come after and second semester begins late in January. The scheduling of parent-teacher conferences is much more difficult to coordinate for all schools. High school teachers have only had some of their students for one month, not really enough time to get to understand the learning styles of their second semester students when the end of February/early March conferences begin. If the second semester began sooner, these conferences would come at six weeks, a time when a teacher is better able to make more complete assessments of his/her students' progress.
3. **WKCE tests.** These tests are administered in late October/early November. By establishing an earlier start to the school year, educators could help meet the student needs in preparation for this test, allowing students to be more successful on the tests. These are high-stakes tests, and students and teachers deserve time to prepare fully for and administer these tests.

Mary Bell, President

Dan Burkhalter, Executive Director



4. Summer Professional Development Courses. There are teachers who have wanted to pursue a course that helps with certification or a course that would be of benefit in preparation for the upcoming school year. By having an ending date in mid-June, many teachers do not have the ability to take these courses.

5. Local control of calendar. I firmly believe that it is in the best interest of public school students of Wisconsin that the beginning date of the school year be returned to local boards of education. The elected officials work hard (as you do with your constituents) to connect with all of the stakeholders-- administrators, parents, teachers, and citizens. They meet to coordinate with all of the stakeholders to increase the opportunities for students and to increase the achievement of all the students. I believe allowing individual school districts to set their own calendars would contribute to student achievement. As teachers, we craft our lessons to meet the variety of students we have in the classroom. I am asking for the ability of the school district to accommodate the needs of the students and citizens living in the district.

This bill does not prohibit any school district from beginning school September 1 or later. I am asking that the flexibility be allowed for the school district to be more creative, with the community help, in establishing a school year for all of our students that are competing in a more global society from the great state of Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Gregory Stewart

815 Highland St

Whitewater, WI 53190

Whitewater High School

Teacher of:

AP US Government & Politics

AP Human Geography

American Civilization

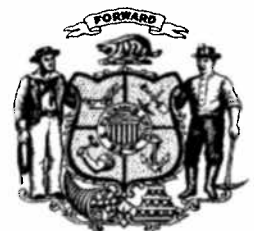
Speech

Geography of Western World

Geography of Eastern World



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





April 2, 2009

Senator Dave Hansen
Room 18 South
State Capital
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, Wisconsin 53707

Dear Senator Hansen:

My name is Charles Pelky the Executive Director of Heritage Hill State Historical Park in Green Bay, Wisconsin. We are a living history museum which provides education for over 50,000 schools, adults and general visitors yearly.

I am concerned with Senate Bill 109 as it would hurt our business and other tourist attractions as well as restaurants and hotels. Summer is Wisconsin's top tourism season, with the prime weather and travel months being July and August, in particular August. In the months of June and July there is Little League, softball and other sports and clubs that make vacations difficult, and for many families the month of August is the only travel time they have. If school were to start in August it would reduce the amount of travel that families can do and would take away the Labor Day travel tradition. Heritage Hill had 30% of its business in the months of July and August. Reducing the weekends in August would have a dramatic effect on our business as well as neighboring businesses. Tens of thousands of people visit our park in the summer and these people eat at restaurants, stay at hotels and attend other attractions. If this number is cut it would have a tremendous economic deficit to the community.

In a time where the economy is so prevalent and urgent on people's minds to pass Senate Bill 109 would be incredibly damaging to local economies. Furthermore at a time where the education budget at all schools is in jeopardy and arts and sports programs need additional funding from outside sources, the number of sources or number of dollars per source will likely be diminished. If potentially weeks of income are lowered there is less money that could be donated to local institutions including schools that are in dire need of additional sources of funding.

Additionally our organization has many high school employees and volunteers that help to make our business run. Waiving the Sept. 1st start date would put a burden on those positions and the assistance needed to run our park. Many other businesses would have the same concerns.

Where an earlier school year can be nice because of an earlier release, the big economic picture will be affected negatively.

Senator Hansen, I encourage you to vote no on Senate Bill 109 so that you can protect Wisconsin businesses. Please pass this on to others on the Educational Committee.

Thank you for your time and should you have questions please contact me at 920-448-5150 ext. 118.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles Pelky". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Charles Pelky
Executive Director-Heritage Hill State Historical Park



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6 April, 2009

STATEMENT TO:

Members, State of WI Senate Education Committee

FROM:

Deb Archer, CDME, President & CEO, Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau

RE:

Repeal of September 1 School Start

Dear Distinguished Committee Members,

I apologize for having to leave before providing testimony on SB 109 which would repeal the current September 1 School Start Date. This is a deeply important issue for our state – economically and emotionally.

As I am sure you learned, the extraordinary economic results of increased August visitor spending since the September 1 School Start Date was implemented is significant. At this time in our state's vulnerable fiscal position, adhering to all policies and practices that yield optimum economic results is critical and should be supported by all legislators.

Also, as a parent of a high school senior, there are deep emotional benefits, for children and parents, who now have more time to enjoy their summers and spend time together as families. For our family, August is now our favorite summer and vacation month. The psychological boost we all have enjoyed knowing that school doesn't start until September 1 has been tremendous. We don't feel rushed or become stressed about rushing back to school when summer is really not over yet. Additionally, since my daughter has been working an outdoor job, she has been able to save more money for college. If school had started in August, her savings would not have been as great and it would be putting pressure on her and us for the next four years.

I implore you as both a citizen and a business person to not pass this bill and to continue to honor the economic and emotionally beneficial law that has our public schools starting September 1 or after.

Thank you.





School District of West De Pere

Administrative Offices
930 Oak St
De Pere, WI 54115

John R. Zegers, Superintendent of Schools

Fax (920) 337-1398

www.wdpsd.com

Phone (920) 337-1393

Testimony in support of Senate Bill 109

Date?

1. Tourism argues about vacations; but, in high schools in Wisconsin we have nearly 30%-40% (or more) of our students participating in co-curricular activities in August. (Families are not taking vacation in August, because scrimmages and contests are starting.)
2. Several fall athletic programs begin competing the third week of August. It would be nice from a school spirit standpoint if the student body was available to support these programs.
3. Going hand in hand with reason number two is football and possible homecoming dates; We will play two of our regular season football contests before and within three days after the first day of school (September 4th). The school spirit impact is only one reason of concern among others; Attendance, thus a poor gate and the possible earlier dates available for Homecoming are two huge things that negatively impact Activities.
4. Students that enroll in District Summer School opportunities don't get a break between the end of the regular session classes and summer classes. There is not enough time to take a break and complete the majority of the class offerings before the 4th of July. Some students might not enroll in summer session because of that.
5. Another couple of reasons from a common sense standpoint....if we start earlier and in consideration of our poor winter weather, it gives us more cushion for school closing (not having to make these days up) and we don't start school and immediately go on a three day weekend or in the case of 09-10, finish a holiday weekend and start school (which is tough on professional and support staff alike).
6. Students are more receptive to learning in August versus later into June.
7. School until mid June may interfere for teachers who want to take summer classes for credit.
8. College students are off from mid May until mid August. So they aren't available for the last two weeks in August for park programs that help watch kids whose parents are working.
9. Let those districts that want to wait until September 1 to start do that; but let us have local control so those of us who want an August start can do so. It works better for us.



Senate Education Committee
Room 201 Southeast, State Capital
Senate Bill 109

Date?

ATTN: Sen. John Lehman (D-Racine), Committee Chair


Dear Mr. Lehman;

My name is Loren Wolfe and I am Vice President of the Arcadia Board of Education. Our school district has been granted a waiver of the Sept. 1 school start date requirement the previous 7 years but was denied for the 2008-2009 school year. Myself, representing the Arcadia Board Of Education, strongly support Senate Bill 109 Repeal the Sept. 1 School Start Date.

1. We have two private elementary schools within our district borders that we need to provide bus transportation. Both schools previously started school in August. If they continue to do so, it would require extra expense on the part of our school district.
2. Our board of education strongly believe that it is educationally and academically sound for our students to return to school the 3rd week of August (they are ready to learn) and end the school year before Memorial Day. In Arcadia we have a huge Broiler-Dairy Days Festival Memorial Day weekend and this has always marked the end of the school year. Vacations are planned and work for students commence at this time. This is our culture and tradition.
3. Our board of education sincerely believe we should have local control to set the start of the school year. We have many state mandates we need to follow and agree with, but school start date should be a local issue.
4. Many of our students live on farms and it is more advantageous labor wise to be available the beginning of the farm season.

The Arcadia School District submitted a resolution to the Wisconsin Association School Board Convention in the past reaffirming WASB policy. We are passionate in our belief for local districts having control to set its own school calendar.

I am an active dairy farmer and the date and time of your hearing does not allow me to testify in person. Please accept my written testimony.


Loren Wolfe, Board Vice President
Arcadia School District





Date?

To: Members of the Wisconsin Senate Education Committee: Senator Lehman Chair

From: Edward J. Lump
President and CEO
Wisconsin Restaurant Association
2801 Fish Hatchery Rd.
Madison, WI 53713

Re: Opposition to SB 109- Repeal of September 1 School Start

The Wisconsin Restaurant Association (WRA) represents over 7,000 restaurant units in Wisconsin. Our membership includes small diners and drive-ins, casual restaurants, supper clubs, tavern restaurants, fine dining, hotel and resort restaurants, ethnic restaurants, multi-unit corporations and franchises. About 35% of our members do not serve alcohol.

WRA is a member and strong supporter of the Wisconsin Tourism Federation (WTF) and I **serve as the current elected president**. A vibrant tourism economy is essential to the survival of many restaurants whether they are located in rural or urban areas. Whether traveling to a destination or at a destination, the tourist usually dines in a restaurant several times a day.

I was president of WTF in 1985 when a bill was signed into law mandating a September 1 start date for the UW system. The arguments against the bill were interference with system and local campus governance (local control), the football schedule, uneven semesters, exams should be given before semester break not afterward and (the big one) students would miss out on the first crack at summer jobs because now the second semester would have to end after Memorial Day. It was said that beginning the first semester after September 1 would diminish the quality of education in the UW System.

Well, 22 years have passed without Armageddon. To our knowledge, the UW system and local campus governance is still the rule on everything but the start date; football is bigger than it was; the second semester does not end anywhere after Memorial day and the UW System provides a quality of education universally envied. **Finally, since 2000, the start date of K-12 schools and the UW system is coordinated giving most families with students in both systems a better chance to be together on vacation.**

I was again president of WTF in 2000 when the bill was signed into law mandating a September 1 start date for K-12 schools. The arguments by opponents centered around high school sports and related activities, school ending later in June, students having less prep time for AP classes and (the big one) local control. This was 9 years ago. **A 2008 poll done by St. Norbert's showed parents support the September 1 start date by a 70-23 margin.**

What I am trying to say here is that there are not likely to be any new arguments presented today and the September 1 start date has been very popular and successful. It may have inconvenienced some but it has not been demonstrated to have hurt education.

Ending date: The tourism industry has never tried to get the school year to end before, or right after, Memorial Day. In an ideal world, we might like that but we recognize that it would be much more difficult for school districts to accomplish a 180 day school year between September 1 and Memorial Day. **Note: The September 1 start date was also a compromise. We really wanted a post Labor Day start date but offered September 1 so that the effect on the school calendar would be minimal and in 4 of 7 years school would start after Labor Day. In the other three years school would start as much as one week before Labor Day. The compromise was rejected but we went forward with it anyway.**

Given a choice, the month of August is much more important to our industry than June. The loss of business from starting the school year earlier in August could never be made up by an earlier release date in June. The reason is simple. The weather is consistently cooler and wetter and the water temperature is much cooler.

Pro-education: The restaurant industry and the rest of the tourism industry contain some of the biggest supporters for schools, education, students and teachers. Others testifying today will speak for their own organizations. The Wisconsin Restaurant Association Education Foundation will award \$39,000 in scholarships for 2009-10 school years. Several of our local chapters have their own scholarship funds. In 2008, to support a nationally acclaimed two year management and culinary curriculum called ProStart ®, WRA will spend over \$92,000. This curriculum is now in 68 Wisconsin high schools.

Many of our members, such as Culvers, have their own foundations or simply award their own scholarships to their employees or through the schools. Restaurants are huge contributors to athletic and academic programs at their local schools. Where do the schools, students, parent organizations or booster clubs go when they need to raise money? The answer is simple-main street businesses especially restaurants.

Our industry is not anti-education or anti-school just because we want to maintain a September 1 start date. We would never do anything to harm schools.

Wisconsin has had a September 1 start date for 9 years. No one has ever been able to point to any harm done. We know that if schools could have their druthers they would rather have the convenience of setting any calendar they wish.

We ask them to understand that repealing the law would have the effect of harming many businesses-many of their friends. It would also deprive families of vacationing together during the best of Wisconsin's weather. Please leave the law the way it is.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ed Lump - SEPTEMBER 1 SCHOOL START DATE GOOD FOR WISCONSIN

From: "Wisconsin Tourism Federation"
To:
Date: 3/31/2009 11:32 AM
Subject: SEPTEMBER 1 SCHOOL START DATE GOOD FOR WISCONSIN



MEMBERS

March 2009

American Automobile Association
www.aaawisconsin.com
 608.828.2495

SEPTEMBER 1 SCHOOL START DATE GOOD FOR WISCONSIN FAMILIES AND ECONOMY

Association of Wisconsin Tourism Attractions
www.wiatraction.com
 608.255.9337

A consistent school start date is in the best interest of Wisconsin families and Wisconsin's economy. The September 1 school start date law has meant more valuable vacation time for families, more tax revenues for the state and our communities and more employment opportunities for our high school students.

Outdoor Advertising Association of Wisconsin
www.aaaw.org
 608.286.0764

Surveys have shown that parents support the September 1 school start date. Families want to vacation together and the good weather and warm water makes late August an ideal time for family vacations in Wisconsin. It is a reality of modern family life that the last two weeks of August may present the one-and-only opportunity for families to spend quality time together during a planned-for getaway.

Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners
www.wisconsincampgrounds.com
 800.843.1821

Tourism during the last two weeks of August returns added tax revenue to fund schools. In the past two years, travelers spent an estimated \$30-35 million more in August than in June statewide, according to the Wisconsin Department of Tourism. The labor pool that also relies on income from these last weeks of August. In many cases, these employees are high school students who will use that income toward their post-high school education.

Wisconsin Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus
www.escapetowisconsin.com
 608.837.6693

Wisconsin Bed and Breakfast Association
www.WisconsinBandB.com
 715.539.9222

Public schools in the city of Chicago, Minneapolis and St. Paul typically begin school in September. These areas are strong markets for the Wisconsin Tourism economy in late August and we need to ensure our hospitality industry has the employees to meet this customer demand. Minnesota and Michigan have a post-Labor Day school start date and in fact, the Minnesota State Legislature just defeated a bill in committee that would have repealed that state's post-Labor Day start.

Wisconsin Dells Visitors and Convention Bureau
www.wisdells.com
 608.254.8088

Wisconsin Innkeepers Association
www.wisconsinlodging.info
 262.782.2851

Local school boards and districts still have flexibility to set their school calendar; selecting holiday breaks, staff development days and making up snow days. Some school districts in Wisconsin manage to finish in early June while others finish in mid-June which demonstrates the flexibility each district has.

Wisconsin Petroleum Marketers & Convenience Store Association
www.wpmca.org
 608.256.7555

There is not a justifiable reason for repealing Wisconsin's September 1 school start date. There is no evidence that it has impacted student performance and it would lead to less revenue for Wisconsin businesses and less income for employees already hurting from the economic recession.

Wisconsin Restaurant Association
www.wirestaurant.org
 608.270.9950

Golf Course Owners of Wisconsin
www.gcow.org
 414-443-3568

Supporting Communities

Restaurateurs are an important part of their communities and neighborhoods, typically giving of their time and resources to support a variety of causes.



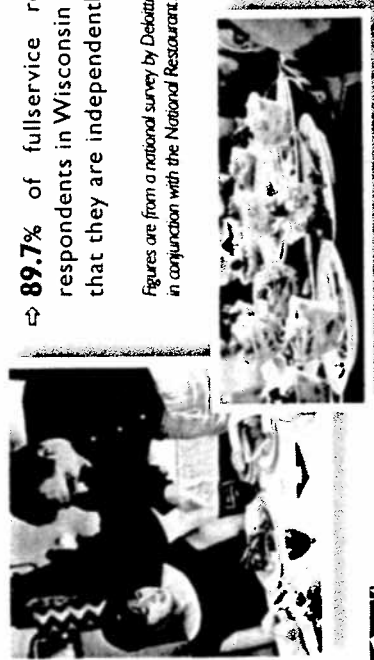
⇒ From donating gift certificates for fundraisers, serving free holiday meals to people who would otherwise be alone, to giving of their time and talents as volunteers and community leaders, restaurateurs are making a positive difference.

Serving up Hospitality & an Independent Spirit

Most restaurants in Wisconsin are independently-owned small businesses. They are operated by hardworking individuals and families who have a passion for providing good food and warm hospitality that enhance the celebration of life's milestones for so many.

⇒ **89.7%** of fullservice restaurant respondents in Wisconsin indicated that they are independently owned.

Figures are from a national survey by Debitz & Touche, LLC in conjunction with the National Restaurant Association.



Wisconsin Restaurant Association
2801 Fish Hatchery Road • Madison, WI 53713
800.589.3211 • 608.270.9950 • www.wirestaurant.org



Small MARGINS

B I G

CONTRIBUTIONS





The Restaurant Industry in Wisconsin

Running a restaurant in Wisconsin is challenging, but rewarding. Narrow profit margins, skyrocketing food costs and the fact that it's highly people intensive are just some of the many hurdles that restaurant operators face on a daily basis.

⇒ Restaurants generally have profit margins that are much lower than most other small businesses. This fact makes running a successful business challenging to say the least.

Nationally, the average profit margin (net income before taxes) for restaurants is only 4 - 8%.*



⇒ Average sales per eating and drinking establishment in Wisconsin in 2007 was **\$543,000**. (NRA/Bureau of Labor Statistics / U.S. Census Bureau)

⇒ Add the fact that restaurants are extremely people intensive – Nationally, labor costs are 34% of total sales for a full service restaurant and 30% for a limited service restaurant.*

⇒ Mix in rising food costs – Wholesale food costs are skyrocketing. For example, the cost of flour has almost doubled in just one year.

The result: cost increases of just a few percentage points for labor, food, utilities, etc. can wipe out a restaurant's bottom line.

⇒ And since the "Food Services and Drinking Places" industry is the top private employer in the state** (according to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development), Wisconsin can't afford to have restaurants closing their doors because they can't continue to make the payroll.



* Figures from 2006/2007 Restaurant Industry Operations Report by Deloitte & Touche, LLC in conjunction with the National Restaurant Association.

Providing Employment & Advancement Opportunities

Restaurants provide career and employment opportunities for individuals of every age, skill, background and experience level.

⇒ According to the Department of Workforce Development, the "Food Services and Drinking Places" industry is:

- The largest private industry employer in Wisconsin.**
- Ranked number one on a list of industries with the most new jobs. (DWD Wisconsin Projections, 2006-2008 Industries with the Most New Jobs)



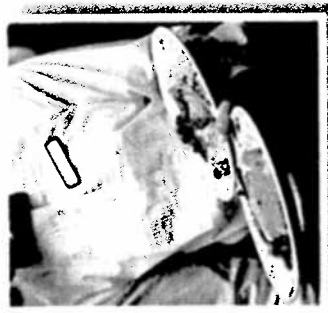
Women and minorities represent three of five owners of eating and drinking place firms, compared to less than half of all U.S. firms.*

⇒ The restaurant industry in Wisconsin provides opportunities to succeed for all.

For many, the restaurant industry offers a first job experience. Our industry works hard to instill a strong work ethic as well as skills that carry employees on to new opportunities both inside and outside the industry.

⇒ Nearly half of all adults have worked in the restaurant industry at some point during their lives.*

⇒ 32% of adults got their first job experience in a restaurant.*



** Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development data: 2007 Top Industries by Annual Average Employment statewide by private ownership.





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Chairman Lehman and members of the Senate Education Committee,

109?

Date?

I would like to speak against SB 190 as a parent of two children ages 15 and 17, as the President and CEO of the Racine County Convention and Visitors Bureau, as well as a representative of the Wisconsin Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus.

As a parent, my wife and I really appreciate the September 1st start date. This has allowed our family to go camping with friends near Castle Rock Lake for a late summer vacation and have a great time hiking, boating and just hanging around together. It's one of the annual highlights of our summer! The kids are busy with pom pom and soccer camps through the end of July. Our summer really doesn't start until August 1. This bill strikes me as "anti-family" in that regard.

Speaking from a local tourism standpoint, summer is our time to really make sure that visitors have "Great Fun on a Great Lake" at North Beach, Wisconsin's only certified clean beach. We would like to see the summer last as long as possible so that more visitors would get a chance to enjoy the warmer water at our beach, visit our attractions and spend their money in Racine County during Wisconsin's best weather. The September start date allows our high school students to be employed longer in the summer and make more money—which they then can spend in the local economy and save for college expenses.

As a representative of the Wisconsin Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus, an earlier start date would mean that those visitors from other states such as Michigan and Minnesota, which have a September start date, would receive subpar service here in Wisconsin because many businesses would be short-staffed after the local students went back to school. This would lead to inferior service at restaurants, hotels and attractions throughout the state. And we know that customers are unlikely to go back to a place that they receive bad service. This would then take a bigger bite out of the taxes generated by visitors to the state, taxes that I believe the state is in need of.

So, to summarize, as a parent I support the September school start because it allows me time to vacation with my family. As a local tourism leader I like to see the significant increase in tourism that it brings to Racine County, and finally as a representative of our state destination marketing association I support the September start date because of the increased revenue and taxes that it brings to the State and the higher level of customer service it allows our local businesses to offer our visitors thereby making their Wisconsin experience more enjoyable.



LANCASTER S.E.A.L.S.

**IMPACTS ON THE
LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Sara McNamara
Thomas Hughey
Lancaster Schools
609-723-2773 (318)

SB 109? Date?

- STUDENTS** (1) Reduced employment/income opportunities for students. School gets out much later, but school activities start at the same time in the fall. The September 1st start date has reduced our earning window two weeks.
- (2) Football has two games, approximately one-quarter of our regular season, before school even starts. For this and other school activities, the atmosphere is different when school is not in session.
- (3) Reduced time to attend athletic, music and other summer camps.

- FAMILIES** (1) Reduced time for family and planning family vacations.
- The window of opportunity for scheduling family vacations is reduced. This is based on school ending later and “virtually” starting at the same time in the fall because of school activities.
 - It is hard to schedule family vacations early in summer because of the potential for snow make-up days.
- (2) Smaller window for vacations makes it harder for parents to get vacation time from employers to coincide with when their children are free.
- (3) Less “summer” time complicates families fitting in not only vacations, but summer recreation programs, swim lessons, schools trips . . . family time.

- COMMUNITIES** (1) Summer Recreation Program depends on student coaches.
- Our summer recreation programs, including baseball, softball, soccer, golf, etc., have high school students as coaches. These coaches struggle to get meaningful practice time in while school is still in session.

- SCHOOLS* (1) Increased transportation costs are realized by our school district and many other school districts statewide. Districts that have private or parochial schools need to provide bussing for these students. Our random survey of these schools shows that about 50% of them start one week before public schools and 50% start two weeks before the public schools. Our local parochial school's start date varies in that 1-2 week earlier window.
- (2) It is hard to coordinate school activities when you are not in school. One example is our FFA students not being as coordinated for the county fair.
- (3) School trips scheduled in the summer, such as to France, Spain, and Washington, D.C. get squeezed.
- (4) Students need to run for class officer and student council the first day of school because Homecoming is usually about the third week of school.
- (5) The September 1st start date puts the end of the first quarter of school right in the optimal time frame for WKCE testing. End of the quarter academic activities such as tests and projects get squeezed out as we try to coordinate WKCE testing. Sophomores cannot be overloaded during the testing window to maximize test scores. At the high school level, classes are moved at all grade levels to provide proctors and classrooms to facilitate the testing.
- (6) The September 1st start date pushes the end of first semester back to the third week of January. This causes pressure in meeting the statutory deadline of February 15 for the Academic Excellence Scholarship, particularly when students have incomplete grades. All students have ten days to take care of incompletes and all incompletes must be taken care of prior to students being ranked. The Robert Byrd Scholarship has a similar deadline and the same issue.
- (7) Many teachers need to take college coursework to maintain licensure. College summer school often starts before public school ends.

Weather-related makeup days in June only add to the problem!!!



States with Start Date Laws

- **Arkansas**- Law requires school start dates no earlier than August 19 and no later than August 26. If August 18 falls on a Monday school may begin on that date. Labor Day must be observed as a holiday.
- **Florida**- the opening date for schools in the district may not be earlier than 14 days before Labor Day each year (2006 law)- allows exemptions for charter schools and high-performing districts
- **Iowa**- Current law bars schools from starting before September 1, but nearly every district in Iowa gets a waiver from the state to start in August. A bill that cleared the House Education Committee in early March would forbid schools from beginning classes before the last Monday in August.
- **Michigan**- requires all public schools in the state to start after Labor Day. (2005 law)
- **Minnesota**- after Labor Day—In March, MN's finance panel voted down a proposal to repeal the school start date on a vote of 13-11, but it will likely appear on the House Floor as an amendment to the Omnibus Education Bill.
- **North Carolina**- Academic instruction may start any time after September 1. Law allows waivers for earlier starts based on past bad weather days.
- **South Carolina**- Law passed prohibits school from beginning before the 3rd week in August. (Law passed 2006)
- **Texas**- A school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August unless the district operates a year-round system
- **Virginia**- Academic instruction may begin after Labor Day. Law also includes a provision that allows school districts to seek a waiver to begin earlier if they meet a certain number of bad weather days in previous years.
- **West Virginia**- The law states "the instructional term shall commence no earlier than August 26 and shall terminate no later than June 28."
- **Wisconsin** - Academic instruction may start any time after September 1.

Same info -
In chart form

STATE SCHOOL START DATE LAWS

State **Law as stated on books** **Comments**

WISCONSIN	Academic instruction may start any time after September 1.	
NORTH CAROLINA	Academic instruction may start any time after September 1. Law allows waivers for earlier starts based on past bad weather days.	
MICHIGAN	Academic instruction may start any time after Labor Day.	
TEXAS	Academic instruction may not begin until the 4 th week of August. (Law passed 2006)	
VIRGINIA	Academic instruction may begin after Labor Day. Law also includes a provision that allows school districts to seek a waiver to begin earlier if they meet a certain number of bad weather days in previous years.	
ARKANSAS	Law requires school start dates no earlier than August 19 and no later than August 26. If August 18 falls on a Monday school may begin on that date. Labor Day must be observed as a Holiday.	

SOUTH CAROLINA	Law passed prohibits school from beginning before the 3 rd week in August. (Law passed 2006)	
FLORIDA	Academic instruction may not begin earlier than 14 days prior to Labor Day. (Law passed 2006)	
IOWA	Law states: "The school year shall begin on the first day of July and each regularly established elementary and secondary school shall begin no sooner than a day during the calendar week in which the first day of September falls but no later than the first Monday in December. However, if the first day of September falls on a Sunday, school may begin on a day during the calendar week which immediately precedes the first day of September. School shall continue for at least one hundred eighty days, except as provided in subsection 3, and may be maintained during the entire calendar year.	
WEST VIRGINIA	The law states "the instructional term shall commence no earlier than August 26 and shall terminate no later than June 28."	
MINNESOTA	Academic instruction may start any time after Labor Day.	





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Minn. panel votes down later school start date

By pvsmlctw, Associated Press

Last update: March 9, 2009 - 1:11 PM

ST. PAUL, Minn. - A proposal to lift a law keeping schools from starting classes before this year's late Labor Day has suffered a setback in the Minnesota House Finance Committee.

The panel voted 13-11 against legislation that would let schools pick a pre-Labor Day start to the year.

Labor Day falls on Sept. 7 in 2009, and some school leaders say that's too late to hold off the resumption of classes. The bill also covers the 2010-11 school year.

The Labor Day debate is a perennial one in the Legislature. Resort owners and businesses that rely on seasonal workers resist efforts to get kids back in school before the traditional summer finale.

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