



LEE NERISON

96TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Remarks of Representative Lee Nerison
on Assembly Bill 402 – Youth Apprenticeship Grants
Assembly Committee on Workforce Development

October 10, 2013

Chair Loudenbeck and Committee Members:

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As the author of Assembly Bill 402, I thank you for holding a hearing on this legislation which would provide additional funding for Wisconsin's Youth Apprenticeship program in order to develop the next generation of our state's workforce.

Wisconsin's Youth Apprenticeship program is a one or two year elective program designed for high school students as part of a statewide School-to-Work initiative. Apprentices train into a technical vocation of their choice through a combination of technical college-level instruction at their local high schools and hands-on training at a worksite.

This program is a nationally-recognized, successful model of how to develop technical skills in our youth. It is a proven strategy to get individuals employed and meet employers' needs. In fact, over 80% of program graduates receive job offers from the employer who provided the training.

Assembly Bill 402 proposes to allocate an additional \$500,000 in the current and the next fiscal year to meet the demands for the Youth Apprenticeship program. Last year, nearly 1,900 apprentices were trained at 1,300 participating worksites, touching 210 school districts.

I urge you to support additional funding for this proven job training and workforce development program which builds on the strong investment that our state has already made in our students as they choose a career and enter the workforce.

Thank you for your consideration.



State Senator Sheila Harsdorf

Date: October 10, 2013

To: Committee on Workforce Development

From: Senator Sheila Harsdorf

Re: Assembly Bill 402 – Youth Apprenticeship Grants

Dear Chair Loudenbeck and Committee Members:

Thank you for holding a public hearing on Assembly Bill 402 (AB 402), which seeks to provide additional funding for grants under the Youth Apprenticeship program.

Wisconsin's Youth Apprenticeship program encourages schools to partner with local businesses to match high school students with employers to provide on-the-job training and technical college-level instruction. This nationally recognized program has proven to be a successful model of how to develop technical skills in our youth. Four out of five students that participate in the program received job offers from the employer that provide the on-the-job training.

The Youth Apprenticeship program is a great school-to-work option for employers and a great opportunity for students as they prepare to enter the workforce or chose a career. AB 402 seeks to supplement current funding by providing an additional \$500,000 in each year of this biennium.

I urge committee members to support this legislation in the effort to support this proven job training and workforce development program. Thank you again for allowing me to provide testimony in favor of the passage of AB 402. I would welcome the opportunity to answer any questions.

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Scott Walker, Governor
Reginald J. Newson, Secretary

**Assembly Committee on Workforce Development
Assembly Bill 402, Local Youth Apprenticeship Grants**

October 10th, 2013

Testimony provided by Jonathan Barry, Deputy Secretary

Chairperson Loudenbeck and members of the Assembly Committee on Workforce Development:

I am Jonathan Barry, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Workforce Development and I appear before you today to speak in favor of Assembly Bill 402.

As you know, Governor Walker's focus has been on making life better for the residents of our state by growing our economy, developing our workforce, transforming education, reforming government, and investing in our infrastructure. Our budget invested over \$100 million in workforce development aimed at equipping workers with the skills they need to find jobs in the modern workforce. These workforce initiatives are already moving Wisconsin forward. Now we are building on that investment with workforce priorities that will continue to further those goals.

Youth Apprenticeship is a proven, nationally-recognized strategy to develop the next generation of the workforce. It integrates school-based and work-based learning to instruct students in employability and occupational skills defined by Wisconsin industries. Local programs provide training based on statewide youth apprenticeship curriculum guidelines, which is endorsed by Wisconsin businesses. Students are simultaneously enrolled in academic classes to meet high school graduation requirements, in a youth apprenticeship related instruction class, and receive on the job training from a participating employer. Students receive training in industry developed skill-standards, paid on-the-job- work experience and, upon completion, a state-issued skill certificate. The Youth Apprenticeship program is truly a win for both the youth and the businesses of Wisconsin.

This bill's proposal to increase funding will build on the strong investment of nearly \$1.8 million in the most recent state budget for Youth Apprenticeship. The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) has authority to issue \$1,773,700 in each of fiscal years 2013-14 and 2014-15 for local youth apprenticeship grants. In SFY13, DWD turned down grant requests to service an additional 555 students due to a lack of funding. With the additional

\$500,000 in funding, DWD's youth apprenticeship program would serve a minimum of 555 additional participants each year. In total, funding over the biennium would be increased to \$4.6 million for Youth Apprenticeship. Consortia all across the state say they can train even more with additional funding.

Along with the other items included in the Governor's fall workforce agenda, this proposal moves Wisconsin forward in our mission to equip our workers with the skills they need to succeed and help employers attract the skilled workers they need to meet demand.