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41st ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Assembly Bill 23: Career and Technical Education Incentive Grants
Testimony of State Representative Joan Ballweg
Assembly Committee on Workforce Development
March 6, 2019

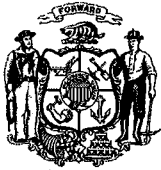
Thank you, Chair Petryk, and members of the committee for holding this public hearing on the Career and Technical Education Incentive Grants bill.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) gives K-12 students the opportunity to participate in work-based learning programs to obtain relevant academic skills as well as employability skills and workforce behaviors needed to succeed in a career. CTE grants are designed for schools to offer programs in industries or occupations with workforce shortages. This funding is used to help schools work with businesses to implement certificate programs, purchase equipment and operate programs.

Currently, the state funds CTE Incentive Grants to K-12 schools through a \$3 million appropriation under the Department of Workforce Development (DWD). Under current law, DWD awards \$1,000 per pupil to school districts for each student who obtains a high school diploma and completes an industry-recognized certification program approved by DWD. The Department of Public Instruction also works with DWD on certificate verifications, to process claims, and pay schools.

This is a successful program that continues grow. The business and education communities appreciate and support these changes and the opportunities that this program affords our students to be ready to join the workforce. By increasing our appropriation, we can reach more students who will benefit from the program and better Wisconsin in the future.

Thank you for considering this bill, and I am happy to answer any questions.



DAN FEYEN

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To: The Assembly Committee on Workforce Development
From: Sen. Dan Feyen
Re: Assembly Bill 23

Mr. Chair and members of the committee, thank you for holding this hearing today.

Senate Bill 16 provides additional funding to the career and technical education grant program that was created in 2013 by Wisconsin Act 59. The purpose of the program is to promote technical education and career readiness in high schools. The idea behind the bill was to identify industries and occupations that face workforce shortages, approve industry-recognized certification programs that will address the workforce shortages, and to grant awards of \$1000 per pupil to school districts for each completed, industry-recognized certification program. \$3 million dollars of Fast Forward money was appropriated in order to fund the grant.

The Class of 2017 had 5,525 valid applicants. Therefore, for each valid applicant school districts received \$640.75, which is \$359.25 fewer dollars than the legislature intended when creating the program. It is projected the amount of money will continue to shrink as school districts continue to graduate more students with industry-recognized certificates. The program is working, students are graduating with the skills employers need, and now the legislature needs to step in and continue to support a winning initiative.

I know many schools in my district have used this money in their technical education programs. For instance, in Oshkosh grant funds have been used to “support teachers that facilitate Youth Apprenticeship coordination, to fund professional development and training for teachers to be able to deliver the content at the level needed to meet the certification requirements, to buy curriculum and software additions, and to reimburse students who successfully pass the CNA exam.” In Fond du Lac, funds from the grant have been used for professional development, materials, and adding a STEM program that explores pathways in computer science, engineering, and biomedical science

AB 23 provides \$3.5 million dollars in additional funding for CTE grants. This bill would ensure Wisconsin is supporting technical education in high schools, growing a qualified workforce, and doing so in a manner that ensures school districts are only receiving dollars when they’ve proven their students are prepared.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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March 4, 2019

Chairman Petryk and members of the Assembly Committee on Workforce Development:

My name is Kim Kaukl, I am the Executive Director of the Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance (WiRSA). I am writing on behalf of Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance (WiRSA) members in support of AB 23. Our organization represents and supports over 215 members with 153 rural school districts, several CESAs, technical colleges, universities, businesses and individual members.

Our organization recently registered in support of the Senate companion bill SB 16 and we will be doing the same on AB 23. We feel the increase appropriations provided in this bill will strengthen an established and help it grow. As a former high school principal, I know how important these grants were in growing and strengthening our Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. Programs like this one, help rural districts continue to provide strong CTE instruction to build a well-trained workforce for our communities, region and state. The passage of AB 23 will allow rural schools districts to partner with their local or regional workforce partners to build on an already strong network and pipeline to meet the workforce needs in their local communities, region and state.

In conclusion, AB 23 will allow for districts and communities to upgrade and/or expand their programs, equipment, technology and physical space to best meet the workforce needs of their community, region and/or state. Therefore, WiRSA strongly supports this bill and is asking for your support of AB 23.

Thank you for your time and taking my written testimony into consideration,

Kim Kaukl

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Strong Schools, Strong Communities