



LOREN OLDENBURG

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 96th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

2019 Senate Bill 88

Relating to: youth apprenticeship programs and making appropriation.

Senate Committee on Local Government, Small Business, Tourism and Workforce Development
March 20, 2019

Thank you, Chairman Jacque and committee members, for holding this public hearing.

Senate Bill 88 will comprehensively fund the Youth Apprenticeship (YA) program. This bill will allow the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) to offer apprenticeship opportunities to youth that seek them, increases the maximum amount of the youth apprenticeship competitive grant - that goes to aide school districts with YA's from \$900 to \$1000, and gives DWD access to rotating funds allowing them to keep their curriculum up to date.

As President of the Westby Cooperative Creamery board I have witnessed firsthand the importance of training and retaining employees. This program helps employers accomplish both: by giving young people workforce experience and helping them find a career in which they can excel. As explained to me by members of my local CESA districts, this doesn't always happen during a student's first apprenticeship. Although each attempt at a youth apprenticeship may not end up exposing the student to their life long career, they are still gaining invaluable soft skills, and a further understanding of where their workforce preferences lie. The program exposes students to career paths and allows them to be paid, rather than accumulate student debt.

The YA program has eleven career programs for students to explore. The passion that a student develops during their experience can lead them to pursue a number of degrees ranging from a technical degree all the way to a PhD. The opportunities based on the experiences these young students get in the YA program are limitless. It is also important to note that this program helps every student find a career they are passionate about – no matter their grade point average.

As a fourth generation and lifelong Wisconsin dairy farmer, I know the ups and downs of the agricultural industry and cannot stress enough the need for more dairy farmers. Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources is one of the eleven career clusters currently offered through the YA program and could help get students interested in this industry while still in high school. Through the program, they can learn about the agricultural industry at places like their local feed mills, and cooperatives. By working at places like these, the student is learning skills that will translate to other areas of the agricultural industry. The YA program can provide students an in-depth industry view, which is why it is so important.

Thank you for your time, and I encourage members of the committee to support Senate Bill 88.



PATRICK TESTIN

STATE SENATOR

DATE: March 20, 2019

RE: Testimony on 2019 Senate Bill 88

TO: The Senate Committee on Local Government, Small Business, Tourism, and Workforce Development

FROM: Senator Patrick Testin

I would like to thank Chairman Jacque and the members of the committee for hearing my testimony on Senate Bill 88 (SB 88) today.

A key component to an effective education is the student's passion. Education is not an assembly line process; one size does not fit all. It's important that our schools help find and foster our students' passions. Youth apprenticeships help students learn about career opportunities in their communities, and help them explore interests that could lead to a full time job down the road.

Wisconsin's Youth Apprenticeship program has a proven track record of success. According to the Department of Workforce Development, nearly 2,500 employers and 3,500 students from 342 high schools participated in the program during the 2016-17 school year. The program completion rate is over 80%, and students in the program earn on average nearly \$10.00 an hour.

In recent years, the Youth Apprenticeship grant program at the Department of Workforce Development has grown substantially. Due to increased interest, the state has chosen to continue to add funding - \$3.2 million in 2016, \$3.9 million in 2017, and \$4.5 million last year. Despite this growth, the base funding for the program has remained at \$2.2 million. This bill adds \$2,766,300 in funding to bring the base in line with what demand has been, and to enable the size of the award to increase from \$900 to \$1,000.

This bill also allocates \$100,000 over the biennia to fund the development of new curricula to replace outdated versions and to create a proper emphasis on high demand fields and the state's workforce needs.

At the suggestion of the Department of Workforce Development, we have added an amendment to tighten up some of the bill's wording, but it does not change the substance of the bill.

Thank you again Chairman and members of the committee for hearing my testimony. I hope that you will join me in supporting SB 88.

1300 Industrial Drive
Fennimore, WI 53809
March 20, 2019

To Chairman Jacque, Vice-Chair Bernier and members of the Committee on Local Government, Small Business, Tourism and Workforce:

Good afternoon. My name is Tom Martin and I am on the School to Work team at the Cooperative Education Service Agency (CESA) 3 in Fennimore, Wisconsin. On behalf of our 35 k-12 member Youth Apprenticeship consortium, I send a letter of support for Senate Bill 88 based on the following:

1) Updating Youth Apprenticeship funding to accurately reflect the increasing demand by schools

The YA program is financially supported by school districts. To offset the costs of this additional programming the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) provides grants on a competitive basis to districts and consortia to offset the costs.

In the past, DWD would transfer funds from other programs to meet this growing demand. In 2018, DWD was allocated \$2.2 million but sent out \$4.5 million in grant aids with this flexibility. We feel more funding should be permanent to ensure the consistency of the program in the future.

This increase in funding needs to occur prior to the end of the 2019 fiscal year as DWD finalizes grant awards in June. By providing these funds in the next few months, DWD can award the full grants in time for next year's classes.

This increase in funding will enable our consortium and the other 37 across the state to reach more students, enabling our fraternity to positioning more centennial Wisconsinites to become career and life ready.

2) Updating the maximum grant amount

Under statute, DWD is prohibited from providing a school district more than \$900 per youth apprentice. The costs of a youth apprentice exceed this, as a school district or consortium is required to provide matching funds equal to 50% of their grant. This limit was set by SB 44 in 2003.

By updating this amount to \$1,000 per student, districts will have additional resources to help expand the program to more students and engage in additional employer outreach.

3) Curriculum update

The DWD is statutorily required for developing and maintaining the curricula for YA programming. With the expanding growth in this program, and expansion into new

sector centers, the updating of curriculum has been lagging, and in some cases is over 10 years old.

This proposal would provide a separate line item for DWD on a rolling basis (Not all programs at once) to update the most needed curriculum first. Priority would be given to updating career clusters of greatest need. This additional funding would ensure that career clusters such as Manufacturing and Finance would keep up with industry demands and would allow for additional business to participate, knowing the students would be learning the relevant skills sets need for Wisconsin businesses to grow.

In discussions with DWD, they need this funding to revamp and retool these pedagogies to be as current as can be. CESA 3 is synergistic with that stance and look forward to working with DWD to assist them with the modernization.

As you can see Senator Jacque and Committee members, this bill will allow our consortium to utilize the State Youth Apprenticeship program to degrees never seen before. This program will empower our future to become as career ready as possible, impacting them, our schools, our communities and ultimately, our state.

We thank you for your consideration of this bill and look forward to a favorable outcome.

Tom Martin, Chuck Keller and Deb Goold
CESA #3's School to Work Team

1300 Industrial Drive
Fennimore, WI 53809
March 20, 2019

To Chairperson Jacque, Vice-Chair Bernier and members of the Senate Committee on Local Government, Small Business, Tourism and Workforce Development:

I would like to thank you Senator Jacque, Vice-Chair Bernier and Committee members for your past, current and future support of Youth Apprenticeship (YA). YA has benefitted tremendously from all of you. It's because of your leadership that YA is now positioned as the Country's premiere work-based learning programming.

To that end, I believe that Senate Bill 72 would ultimately undermine the momentum you have established. For the reasons of 1) diluting funds for what would be at unattainable base level occupations, 2) a delay in modernization and finally, 3) what could be a delay in response for employer driven programming are reasons what I speak in opposition to the bill.

Senate Bill 72 would allow the focus to expand out from the 11 to 16 clusters where there would be possibly placements in areas where our students have no access at employment. In CESA 3 we have numerous students who aspire for careers in the Human Services Cluster: Counseling and Mental Health Services pathway such Counseling Psychologist, Mental Health Counselor, Sociologist and Substance Abuse Counselor. There is no professional means available to us as a society for which to employ a high school student in any of these capacities. Even with the rigorous training we provide, as a program, YA wouldn't even be able to help our students reach an orientation stage of what these and many occupations would require. Thus this bill would divert financial resources that could be used elsewhere.

As a result of funding, our modernization suite of clusters has been delayed due to budget cuts. Where curricula that should be no older than 3 years, we have currently pedagogies that are currently going on twelve years. Investing in an additional five more clusters would further delay the microsecond change in occupations that we currently see and would pause the modernization work that's necessary to constantly refine and ultimately reinforce the skillsets necessary in today's workforce.

Finally, when pedagogical changes are delayed, the natural response to our state's employers will also be delayed. What has made YA so impactful is its meteoric response to what our state's industries need. Health Services, Manufacturing, Information Technology and Agriculture are just some of the key occupational sectors that need YA and we as consortiums are responding. In our Labor Market Information analysis, our consortium does not see the need in the Government or Law Clusters. Education and Human Services would for the most part be unattainable.

In closing, while Senate Bill 72 is positive in its intent, we believe it should be reconsidered as it would dilute funds from the high-skill, high need areas that our employers desire. The expansion to all 16 clusters would delay the modernization of curriculum and diffuse the programmatic focus which YA has been renown for.

I am available for questions and thank you for your time and attention.

Thank you and ON WISCONSIN!

Tom Martin
School to Work Coordinator, Southwest Wisconsin YA Consortium (Representing 34 Districts)

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Tony Evers, Governor
Caleb Frostman, Secretary

Testimony on Senate Bill 88
Senate Committee on Local Government, Small Business, Tourism and Workforce
March 20, 2019

Thank you, Chair Jacque and Committee Members, for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) regarding Senate Bill 88, which makes several changes to Wisconsin's Youth Apprenticeship (YA) Program.

Wisconsin's YA began in 1991 and has served nearly 25,000 students. YA provides students the benefit of learning about occupations before high school graduation and gaining key skills that allow them to immediately enter the workforce after graduation if they choose. YA experienced a record number of both student and employer participants in the 2017-2018 school year, with 3,108 businesses supporting 4,362 students. The 2018-2019 school year looks to continue program growth, with 4,871 students enrolled.

The Department has developed a YA-to-RA Bridge program that helps students transition seamlessly from high school into a full-time Registered Apprenticeship career. Bridges have been created in 10 different occupations in the Construction and Manufacturing sectors.

Senate Bill 88 updates YA funding to reflect the increased demand from schools, students, and businesses, and allows that funding to be carried forward. As demand for the program continues to grow, such consistency in funding allows Department staff to know what resources will be available in advance, thereby allowing them to develop more proactive programming.

Senate Bill 88 also increases the maximum grant amount that DWD may award to school districts from \$900 per youth apprentice to \$1,000. School districts are required to fund at least a 50 percent match to the grant. The salary cost of program coordinators has at least kept pace with inflation, and tuition increases have far exceeded inflation, while the \$900 per student cap has remained flat since 2003.

The Department recognizes and appreciates the authors' support of YA programming in this legislation; however, we respectfully request the following changes be included:

1. Under Section 4, amend s. 106.13 (2) to read: "The council on workforce investment established under 29 USC 3111, the technical college system board, the Apprenticeship Advisory Council, and the department of public instruction shall assist the department in providing the youth apprenticeship program."

The Wisconsin Apprenticeship Advisory Council advises DWD on matters involving the Wisconsin Apprenticeship System, including the enactment of laws, rules, and standards. The Department would appreciate clarifying in statute that the Council also assists the Department in providing the YA program.

2. Under Section 5, amend s. 106.13 (2m) to read: "The department shall develop the curricula considering each of the following:"

Removing "each of" provides clarity that not all provisions in Section 6 106.13 (2m) (a) (b) and (c) are mandated but instead should be given consideration during development of the curricula.

3. Under Section 6, amend s. 106.13(2m)(b) to read: "To meet state and local workforce needs."

In developing curriculum for YA programs, the bill currently directs the department to consider (a) meeting high demand fields and local workforce needs, (b) meeting state and local workforce needs in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), and (c) replacing outdated curricula that no longer serve state or local workforce needs.

The Department already offers YA programs in STEM fields; however, the Department is concerned about specifying these or any fields in statute because apprenticeship programs should be employer-driven. Without employer support, it is much more difficult to connect youth with employers.

4. Under Section 6, amend s. 106.13(2m)(c) to read: "To revise, replace, and/or modify outdated curricula that no longer serve state or local workforce needs."

In addition to having the option to replace outdated curricula, the Department would like the flexibility to revise, modify or update curricula as appropriate.

5. Under Section 7, amend s. 106.13(3) to read: "The youth apprenticeship program under sub. (1) shall not affect any apprenticeship program that is governed by subch. I. except that an apprenticeship program that is governed by subch. I shall may grant credit toward the completion of an apprenticeship for the successful completion of a youth apprenticeship."

The bill codifies DWD's current practice under the Bridge Program to encourage YA credentials to transfer to a relevant RA program. DWD provides guidance on how to consider "dual credit" for local RA sponsors and joint apprenticeship committees. However, the Department is concerned with changing "may" to "shall," as it has no legal standing to enforce this directive. The Department can, and already does, ensure the programs are aligned for maximum potential credit. Mandates could possibly turn off employers from apprenticeship.

6. Under Section 7, amend s. 106.13 (3) to read: "The department shall create standards guidelines for granting credit under this subsection."

DWD currently prepares Bridge Policy Guidelines for consideration of granting credits. Staff is interested in maintaining consistency of language in terms of guidelines versus standards.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony and the requested amendments. We have been in contact with Representative Oldenberg's office and they mentioned they currently have amendments in drafting, so we look forward to seeing those and thank the Representative and staff for reaching out to DWD throughout this entire process.