



DAVID STEFFEN

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 4TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Chair Novak and Committee Local Government Members,

Thank you for holding a public hearing on AB 580 relating to the investment of critical relief funds into Wisconsin's cities and villages.

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue currently administers a small business grant program known as the Wisconsin Tomorrow Small Business Recovery Program (WTSBRP). The program aims to assist small businesses with their post-pandemic economic recovery using funds from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). This bill would require DOR, in consultation with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, to distribute excess WTSBRP moneys to cities and villages that received or are eligible to receive \$2.5 million or less in combined grants or awards under the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act of 2020 (CARES Act), the Coronavirus Response and Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020, and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA).

As Wisconsin emerges from the pandemic, cities and villages across the state must navigate the economic landscape with depleted resources. Using excess funds from the Wisconsin Tomorrow Small Business Recovery Program, this bill would expedite the process of pandemic recovery.

To be clear, only federal dollars fund this one-time, small business, small community grant program. With \$300 million of allocated grant funds already having been distributed to small businesses across the state, \$50 million is left for redistribution to Wisconsin's cities and villages. Recipients of excess grant funds would be required to distribute the moneys to small businesses or use the funds for downtown development of the city or village. Large communities have been the greatest beneficiaries of federal COVID-19 funding. This bill provides an opportunity to invest our state's small communities and offer much needed relief for small businesses and downtown areas.

I appreciate your consideration of this bill and would be happy to answer any questions you may have.