



Warren Petryk

State Representative • 93rd Assembly District

Date: September 29, 2021

To: Members of the Senate Committee on Government Operations, Legal Review, and Consumer Protection

From: Representative Warren Petryk

Re: Testimony regarding Senate Bill 195 & 196

Good morning Chairman Stroebel and members of the committee. I appreciate this opportunity to come before you today to speak in favor of Senate Bills 195 & 196.

These two bills are simple and would authorize the City of Prescott and the Village of Pepin the opportunity to become a premier resort area. As you know, tourism is an extremely important industry in Western Wisconsin, especially for small communities that border Minnesota. With the removal of lockdowns, our area of the state is starting to recover from last year and seeing a healthy increase in tourism spending. These bills would help these two areas capture some of that additional tourism spending.

The Village and Town have requested the opportunity to capture some of this increased tourism spending to help cover the costs of increased infrastructure, which is support by the local taxpayers. For example, an advisory referendum in Pepin passed 2 to 1 back in 2018.

Thank you again Chairman Stroebel for this opportunity to have this bill heard before the committee.



JEFF SMITH

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR – 31ST DISTRICT



TO: Senate Committee on Government Operations, Legal Review and Consumer Protection

From: Senator Jeff Smith

Date: September 20, 2021

RE: Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 195 and Senate Bill 196

Chairman Stroebel and members of the committee, thank you for agreeing to hear these bills, and for giving me the opportunity to speak on their behalf.

Senate Bill 195 was introduced at the request of the City of Prescott, Wisconsin. The City of Prescott is the northern gateway of Wisconsin's Great River Road and is the confluence of the St. Croix and Mississippi Rivers. Prescott is a major crossroads for river-related tourists traveling by land and water. The City of Prescott welcomes thousands of tourists each year with open arms, but this creates a significant strain on the City's budget.

Senate Bill 196 was introduced on behalf of the Village of Pepin, Wisconsin. This community, much like Prescott survives on tourism dollars. Pepin experiences an undue hardship on the community's infrastructure. Sewer, water, streets, and law enforcement have been severely strained due to the large influx of tourist related activities.

Both of these bills allow the City of Prescott and the Village of Pepin to be declared a Premier Resort Area, even if less than 40% of the equalized assessed value of the taxable property within the communities is used by tourism-related retailers. Prescott and Pepin would also need to approve a referendum before they could impose a 0.5% sales tax increase on sales, leases or rentals of goods or services from tourism-related retailers.

The investments from the Premier Resort Area Designation will increase the economic sustainability of these communities. Furthermore, the revenue collected from these retailers can only be used specifically for infrastructure expenses such as roads, parking lots, bridges, sewer and water facilities, recreational facilities, exposition center facilities, firefighting equipment or police vehicles.

I am sure that I can speak for Representative Petryk and say that we are both grateful for the committee to hear these bills. Again, thank you for your consideration and we are both hopeful that they can move swiftly through this committee.

Thank you and I am happy to answer any questions.