



JOEL KITCHENS

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 1ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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Contact: Rep. Joel Kitchens
(608) 266-5350

Rep. Kitchens Supports Rural Wisconsin Initiative

Seven Bills Included in Initial Plan; Website Launched to Gather Public Feedback

Madison, WI – This week, a group of Republican legislators hailing from rural areas across the state came together to announce the Rural Wisconsin Initiative, an initial package of seven pieces of legislation that they hope will jumpstart a conversation on opportunities in outstate Wisconsin.

The plan includes bills that will boost funding for broadband expansion grants, increase available resources for youth apprenticeship grants and tuition reimbursement grants for apprenticeships, create rural opportunity zones, expand a student loan repayment program for rural teachers, encourage STEM education in rural school districts, and bolster funding for the Wisconsin Rural Physician Residency Assistance Program (WRPRAP).

“Rural areas are important to our state and have problems that are easily overlooked,” said Rep. Kitchens. “Many of my constituents have contacted my office regarding short-comings in rural areas. Better broadband, education services, and assistance to our rural areas will benefit everyone in the district.”

“As a longtime school board member, I am very aware of the challenges our small districts face in attracting and keeping teachers,” continued Kitchens. “I believe that the education items in this initiative will help to ease that problem.”

Several legislators have joined Rep. Kitchens in supporting the plan, including Reps. Ed Brooks (Reedsburg), Romaine Quinn (Rice Lake), Travis Tranel (Cuba City), Joan Ballweg (Markesan), Kathy Bernier (Chippewa Falls), Mary Czaja (Irma), James Edming (Glen Flora), Scott Krug (Nekoosa), Bob Kulp (Stratford), Tom Larson (Colfax), Jeff Mursau (Crivitz), John Murtha (Baldwin), Lee Nerison (Westby), Todd Novak (Dodgeville), Warren Petryk (Eleva), Keith Ripp (Lodi), John Spiros (Marshfield), Rob Swearingen (Rhineland), Gary Tauchen (Bonduel), and Nancy VanderMeer (Tomah).

“Public involvement is crucial to the Wisconsin Rural Initiative,” continued Rep. Kitchens. “We want to work with people to develop legislation to build our future in rural Wisconsin.”

To view the plan or offer suggestions, please visit www.RuralWisconsinInitiative.com.

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