



For Immediate Release
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DOYLE/SHILLING JOBS BILL TO BE SIGNED BY GOVERNOR WALKER

The Small Business Diversification and Market Expansion Initiative authored by Rep. Steve Doyle (D-Onalaska) and Senator Jennifer Shilling (D-La Crosse), which passed both houses of the Legislature, will be signed ceremonially in Onalaska on Friday, May 23rd. The bill was officially signed into law in April in Madison, but the Governor agreed to do another signing in La Crosse County. “This bill will help businesses in our community and across the state to compete in a global economy,” said Doyle. “I am pleased the Governor is able to take the time for a visit to Onalaska on behalf of this important jobs legislation,” added Doyle.

This proposal will expand the existing scope of Workforce Advancement Training Grants (WAT) available to Technical Colleges. The grants will provide strategic planning and technical assistance to help companies diversify their business. “This diversification will ultimately result in job growth,” according to Doyle.

“Current use of WAT grants is too limited for many businesses to make use of them. This proposal was designed to help companies compete in new markets by expanding the way these grants can be used,” said Doyle. The bill did not add additional revenue to the program; it uses money more efficiently.

“As we continue to look for ways to boost our state’s economy and accelerate workforce development efforts, the WAT Grant bill will give our Technical College System more flexibility to respond to changes in the local economy,” added Sen. Jennifer Shilling (D-La Crosse). “This legislation will enable both emerging and existing companies to diversify their operations and compete in new markets.”

This bill was originated by La Crosse economic development professionals and was formulated at a roundtable consisting of representatives from Western Technical College, Workforce Connections, La Crosse County Chamber of Commerce, La Crosse Area Development Corporation and other members of the Seven Rivers Alliance, Rep. Steve Doyle and Senator Jennifer Shilling.

The WAT grant bill passed the Legislature with broad bi-partisan support. “Jobs creation is not a partisan issue, and I was happy to work with both sides of the aisle to make sure this bill became law,” said Doyle.