



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE  
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## ***PRESS RELEASE***

January 29, 2019

### **Sen. Testin, Rep. Kulp Reintroduce Bill to Make Farms Safer** *Rep. Kurtz and Sen. Bernier Co-author Bill to Create Grant Program for ROPS*

**Madison, WI** – Tractor rollovers are the leading cause of death on farms, but one group of Wisconsin legislators is trying to eliminate the hazard.

Senator Patrick Testin (Stevens Point) and Representative Bob Kulp (Stratford) are reintroducing a bill to provide state funding for Wisconsin’s farm tractor Rollover Protection Structure (ROPS) Rebate Program. Joining them as co- authors are Senator Kathy Bernier (Chippewa Falls) and Representative Tony Kurtz (Wonewoc).

“A farmer’s workplace doesn’t always have four walls and a ceiling – sometimes it’s up in the tractor,” said Rep. Kulp. “This bill will help make that workplace safer.”

Rep. Kurtz, an organic farmer, agreed that now is the right time for this legislation. “Small farmers are being hit hard by low commodity prices. Making safety features affordable is the right thing to do. I was fortunate to survive a tractor rollover, and I want my neighbors to be able to say the same thing.”

The ROPS program was founded by the National Farm Medicine Center, part of Marshfield Clinic Research Institute, in 2012. Since then, the program has helped fund the installation of more than 245 ROPS on tractors.

“For nearly forty years, the National Farm Medicine Center has been doing a great job of addressing the health and wellness needs of farm families,” said Sen. Bernier. “I’m proud to help them make working conditions safer for our farmers.”

Last session, the agricultural committees in both houses of the legislature passed the bill unanimously, but session ended before the bill could be voted on by the full body. Senator Testin believes that with an early start, the bill has a good chance of success.

“By starting the process now, we can hopefully put this program to work in the next few months,” said Sen. Testin. “The sooner we can make life on the farm safer, the better.”

The bill is currently circulating for co-sponsors prior to its official introduction.

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