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Sen. Jon Erpenbach: New jobs, businesses a priority

By Sen. Jon Erpenbach
D-Waunakee

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Not a day goes by when I don't think about the people and families in my district struggling with unemployment. Continuing to build on the jobs that were created and preserved as a part of the federal and state budgets; another jobs package was announced last week.

The Wisconsin Connecting Opportunity, Research and Entrepreneurship (CORE) jobs act was announced at a business in the 27th Senate District. Sologear, of Middleton, which produces the FlameDisk, an ethanol-based non-charcoal grilling heating mechanism, received an Angel Investment tax credit from the State of Wisconsin to leverage part of its start-up funds. Sologear now employs nine full-time employees and hires temporarily during production periods. The CORE jobs act builds on that entrepreneurial spirit and the small business development and growth that we know builds good jobs.

The CORE plan creates new jobs and businesses by expanding Accelerate Wisconsin, adding \$2 million in venture tax credits and an additional \$1 million in new Angel credits available in 2010. These tax credits have leveraged tens of millions of early-stage investment dollars and have helped create new companies, like Sologear, all over Wisconsin. CORE also includes several provisions to speed the development of new businesses based on research emerging from our state's educational and research institutions, as well as helping make connections with existing companies to help create new jobs at current businesses. Microloans also are available to people that always have dreamed of owning their own business; many dislocated workers are considering this option to work for themselves. CORE also works to speed up regulatory permits and approval with a "one-stop shop" for businesses with the creation of the Regulation Ombudsman Center, to help speed up approval and help with permitting and funding resources. The Ombudsman Center has the authority to bring state agencies together for our businesses. Additionally, a grant writer will be hired to help companies compete for Federal Small Business Innovation and Research Grants.

The CORE plan works to retain and grow existing businesses by boosting the Wisconsin Development Fund for capital loans to businesses, renewing shuttered factories through green energy grants, bringing jobs back to Wisconsin with Farmshoring grants to businesses that bring jobs back to Wisconsin. Finally the CORE plan reinvests in education and training of our workforce with advanced manufacturing training grants to improve workers' skills and the leveraging of new incentives in education with tax incentives for businesses that pay their employees' tuition.

The Wisconsin CORE Jobs Act costs \$15 million to implement in the current biennium. The spending comes from unencumbered GPR that is outside the statutory balance. There are no tax increases or other revenue enhancers included in the bill. For more information on the Wisconsin CORE Jobs Act, please contact my office at 888-549-0027 or sen.erpenbach@legis.wi.gov.

- Sen. Jon Erpenbach,

D-Waunakee, serves the

27th Senate District, which includes Green County.