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Contact: Senator André Jacque

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(608) 266-3512

SEN. JACQUE'S WORKFORCE GROWTH AGENDA CLEARS SENATE *Measures enhance apprenticeships, streamline professional licensing*

MADISON... To help develop and grow the talent pool of skilled workers desperately needed by Wisconsin employers, the State Senate today passed legislation to enhance apprenticeship learning and streamline professional licensing.

State Sen. André Jacque (R-De Pere), author of the Workforce Growth Agenda measures, and Chairman of the Senate Committee on Licensing, Constitution and Federalism, said the initiatives are critical to eliminating excessive barriers faced by experienced workers who want to move to Wisconsin, and younger people just starting their careers in our state.

"I hear often from employers who are desperate for skilled workers throughout the experience spectrum," Sen. Jacque said. "These proposals will help fill those gaps and assist workers as they advance in their careers toward family-supporting jobs in Wisconsin."

Sen. Jacque's Workforce Growth Agenda includes:

Licensing Reciprocity for Workforce Growth Act

Sen. Jacque said the Reciprocal Credentials for Workforce Growth Act will establish reciprocal licensing in Wisconsin to attract skilled workers who are already credentialed in another state. Expanding reciprocity will allow citizens to become licensed faster when moving to, or back to, or needing to find work in Wisconsin.

"This initiative addresses increasingly acute shortages of licensed professionals in a number of critical fields, and the resulting stresses on the remaining professionals in their fields and public at large," Sen. Jacque said. "Eliminating unnecessary, redundant governmental barriers to employment will not only help fill critical jobs in our economy but also highlight Wisconsin as an ideal state to live and work."

Tools of the Trade Apprenticeship Grant Program

Under the program expansion, each individual student who qualifies is eligible to receive up to \$1,500 to assist in paying for materials and expenses associated with the apprenticeship training program, including tools, clothing, equipment, and supplies. Sen. Jacque said this proposal addresses a significant financial barrier to entering well-paying skilled trade careers.

"The most recent data available showed the median salary for students completing an apprenticeship to be over \$84,000," Sen. Jacque said. "Apprenticeships have been successful in helping meet the growing demand for these family-supporting jobs, but the financial challenges can be daunting."

These initiatives in Sen. Jacque's Workforce Growth Agenda, which passed the Senate as separate legislation (as [Senate Bill 135](#) on September 14th of this year and unanimously today as [Senate Bill 93](#)), were also included within today's special session on workforce development. They now move to the State Assembly and must be signed by the Governor to become law.

Senator André Jacque represents Northeast Wisconsin's First Senate District, consisting of Door and Kewaunee Counties and portions of Brown, Calumet, Manitowoc, and Outagamie counties.