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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Rural Wisconsin Initiative Looks to Bridge Gap

Madison, WI – Today, Representative Rob Swearingen (R-Rhineland), along with 21 other rural Wisconsin legislators, held a press conference to introduce seven pieces of legislation aimed to benefit education, healthcare, broadband infrastructure, and the economy in rural Wisconsin. The Rural Wisconsin Initiative was assembled by Representative Romaine Quinn (R-Rice Lake), Representative Ed Brooks (R-Reedsburg), and Representative Travis Tranel (R-Cuba City) to address the needs of rural Wisconsin.

The Rural Wisconsin Initiative Agenda includes the following seven legislative proposals:

- Increase funding for broadband expansion grants
- Attract teachers with incentive of student loan repayment programs
- Establishment of S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) curriculum grants
- Increase funding for apprenticeship grants
- Increase funding for apprenticeship tuition reimbursement programs
- Attract out-of-state graduates ready to enter the workforce
- Expand funding for the Wisconsin Rural Physician Residency Assistance Program

“The goal of the Rural Wisconsin Initiative is to retain and attract the younger generation to Wisconsin’s smaller, rural communities. Rural Wisconsin is not only a great place to start your career, but also an ideal location to raise a family. Unfortunately, counties in Northern Wisconsin, as well as rural counties around the state, have experienced significant population losses in recent decades as youth move to larger cities. The stigma that rural Wisconsin does not offer a similar quality of life that a “big city” does is an issue we as legislators must address,” said Rep. Swearingen.

“I am encouraged and excited that 21 rural legislators are working together to solve the problems that our local communities are faced with,” finished Rep. Swearingen.

Included in the Rural Wisconsin Initiative are Representatives: Joan Ballweg (R-Markesan), Kathy Bernier (R-Chippewa Falls), Mary Czaja (R-Irma), James Edming (R-Glen Flora), Joel Kitchens (R-Sturgeon Bay), Scott Krug (R-Nekoosa), Bob Kulp (R-Stratford), Tom Larson (R-Colfax), Jeff Mursau (R-Crivitz), John Murtha (R-Baldwin), Lee Nerison (R-Westby), Todd Novak (R-Dodgeville), Warren Petryk (R-Eleva), Rob Swearingen (R-Rhineland), Keith Ripp (R-Lodi), John Spiros (R-Marshfield), Gary Tauchen (R-Bonduel), and Nancy VanderMeer (R-Tomah).



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The Rural Wisconsin Initiative is striving for bipartisan support on all seven proposals.

To follow the progress and provide input for the Rural Wisconsin Initiative, please [view our website](#). The website provides information on the [Rural Wisconsin Agenda](#), participating legislators and press releases. Lastly, the website provides access to the Rural Wisconsin [Facebook Page](#) and [Twitter](#).

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