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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 21st, 2023

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Rep. Penterman Votes for Right to Read Legislation

Madison, WI – State Representative William Penterman (R – Columbus) released the following statement following passage of the “Right to Read” legislation [Assembly Bill 321](#).

“Sixty-four percent of fourth-graders are not proficient at reading, said Representative Penterman. “For too long, Wisconsin students have been improperly prepared to read proficiently. We must prepare them for their futures. Two-thirds of children who cannot read at grade level in third grade will end up in prison or on government welfare. I am proud to be a co-sponsor of this legislation that comprehensively reforms young students’ reading readiness and vote for its passage.”

[Assembly Bill 321](#) would provide essential funding for 64 reading coaches throughout the state, screen schoolchildren on their reading abilities throughout the school year, notify parents of concerns, and create a clear plan to get kids back on track to succeed. Additionally, the reading plan will provide mandatory summer instruction struggling students and will stay with that student until he or she gets caught up to grade level. Under this bill, the state will pay for half of the cost of the curriculum for any district that chooses to purchase a new curriculum from a list of approved Science of Reading programs.

“Right to Read” is largely modeled after the “Mississippi Miracle”, after Mississippi implemented many of these provisions. Mississippi saw a drastic increase in fourth-grade reading ability and rose from dead last in the country to 29th amongst all 50 states in reading scores.

The bill passed on a 67-27 bi-partisan vote. It now will head to the State Senate.

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The 37th Assembly District includes portions of Columbia, Dane, Dodge, and Jefferson counties.