



NANCY VANDERMEER

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 70TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

For Immediate Release:

March 7, 2019

Contact: Rep. Nancy VanderMeer

(608) 266-8366

VanderMeer Shows Support for Youth Apprenticeship Programs

Madison – Representative Nancy VanderMeer (R-Tomah) appeared before the Assembly Committee on Workforce Development yesterday to show support for Youth Apprenticeship Programs throughout the state. VanderMeer testified in support of Assembly Bill 57, authored by Representative Loren Oldenburg (R-Viroqua) and Senator Patrick Testin (R-Stevens Point).

Assembly bill 57 provides an increase in funding for the program, increases the grant amounts to school districts to better reflect their costs, allows for an update of curriculum and career clusters, and codifies the apprenticeship bridge practice to allow for hours to easily be transferred to a relevant Registered Apprenticeship program.

VanderMeer released the following statement:

“Even though I co-sponsored the bill, I wanted to testify before the committee to share my personal experience with the program and why I think this particular program has an immense amount of utility for the state. That utility comes in the form of providing tangible training and learning experiences for our students and also facilitating a workforce ready pool of potential new employees to employers.

“I had the opportunity to work with the program and represent my business on the Tomah School District’s School to Work Program Committee, and I know how impactful it is. For example, in fiscal year 2018-2019, in the Tomah Area School District, 23 students and 22 employers participated in the program. The two largest program areas are Agriculture and Construction and Manufacturing – two critical workforce areas locally. Our economy remains strong but a recent survey of statewide business leaders shows that while 55% of those surveyed plan to hire in the next six months, 74% of them say they can’t find workers and 50% of respondents rank the labor shortage/lack of qualified applicants as the top public policy issue facing the state. There’s an immense shortage of workers to fill open positions. As a state, we need to do what we can to support enrichment and training opportunities for our students and also do what we can do to encourage a robust and linked relationship between students, educational programs, and employers.”

###

The 70th Assembly District includes portions of Monroe, Jackson, Portage and Wood counties.