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STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 92nd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

For Immediate Release:
May 7, 2021

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The Cost of Broadband

Over the last four and a half years serving you in Madison, there has been a lot of talk about expanding broadband to our most underserved areas across the state. As a legislature, we have done exactly that by emphasizing the need to expand and have passed numerous bills to do so. Unfortunately, a lot of these bills don't get the media attention they deserve.

At the start of the 2021-2022 Legislative Session, the Wisconsin State Assembly added the Committee on Science, Technology and Broadband to tackle many of the broadband concerns seen across the state. In addition, we passed a bill that Governor Evers vetoed that would have provided \$500 million in broadband expansion to those who need it most in our rural and underserved communities.

Since 2018, a total of \$20.9 million has been awarded to Buffalo, Trempealeau and Jackson Counties. Whereas a total of \$855,682 has been provided directly from the state and has been allocated between Buffalo and Trempealeau Counties.

To break down the funding, Buffalo County has received \$704,582 in Broadband Expansion Grants from the State of Wisconsin and \$3,454,781 from federal monies through the Connect America Fund and Rural Digital Opportunity Fund.

In addition, Trempealeau County has received a total of \$151,100 from the state since 2018 through the Broadband Expansion Grant and \$7,040,425 from the two same federal grants as Buffalo and Jackson Counties.

With the most federal funding received, Jackson County has received a combined \$9,548,490 from federal monies.

These numbers are important to keep in mind when discussing broadband issues. While we all want access to high quality internet, these are still private companies and the state only has the power to encourage them to expand.

As always, feel free to contact my office with questions, comments, or concerns at Rep.Pronschinske@legis.wi.gov.

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