



Hemp Legislation Moves to the Governor’s Desk

Growing Opportunities Act Passes the Assembly Unanimously

Madison, WI – Hemp has a home in Wisconsin. The Growing Opportunities Act, which updates Wisconsin’s hemp law following the passage of the 2018 federal farm bill, passed the Assembly unanimously on Tuesday, after sailing through the Senate with broad bi-partisan support last month.

Senators Patrick Testin (R-Stevens Point) and Lena Taylor (D-Milwaukee) partnered with Representatives Tony Kurtz (R-Wonewoc) and Dave Considine (D-Baraboo) to introduce the Growing Opportunities Act this past spring. The bill makes a number of changes to the state’s hemp law to accommodate changes at the federal level and to incorporate lessons from the first two years of hemp cultivation in nearly six decades.

“Hemp is opening doors in Wisconsin – literally,” said Senator Testin. “Less than two weeks ago I toured the old Nekoosa paper mill, which had been closed for some time. It’s been repurposed into a hemp drying and storage facility for this harvest season. This crop has a lot of potential.”

In 2019, the number of growers and processors increased exponentially. Rep. Kurtz, who grows hemp and other organic crops on his 260 acre farm in Juneau County, sees hemp as an emerging crop.

“Wet growing seasons have been a challenge in 2018 and 2019,” said Rep. Kurtz. “Still, I believe that Wisconsin is a great place to grow hemp. Our farmers are looking to diversify, and I believe we can be a national leader in this crop.”

Rep. Dave Considine, a former teacher and livestock farmer, is also excited about hemp’s potential.

“It’s hard to believe that as recently as 2017, it was illegal to grow hemp in our state,” said Rep. Considine. “Central Wisconsin is home to many growers and processors, and my colleagues and I are working to ensure their success.”

Milwaukee Sen. Lena Taylor views hemp as a boon for both rural and urban areas.

“Urban and rural entrepreneurs are creating the framework of this industry,” said Sen. Taylor. “I know that the City of Milwaukee can be a leader in urban agriculture, and hemp is key part of that story.”

The Growing Opportunities Act now awaits the signature of Governor Evers, who has indicated that he will sign it into law.

###



Sen. Testin
(608) 266-3123



Sen. Taylor
(608) 266-5810



Rep. Kurtz
(608) 266-8531



Rep. Considine
(608) 266-7746