



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 24, 2017

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Senators David Craig & Chris Kapenga Send Letter to Congress on Federalism Request Regulatory and Unfunded Mandate Relief for Wisconsin

Madison, Wis. – On Friday, Senator David Craig (R-Town of Vernon) and Senator Chris Kapenga (R-Delafield) sent a letter to Congressman Jason Chaffetz (UT-03), Chairman – Committee on Oversight and Government Reform to request relief from Federal Regulations and Unfunded Mandates.

“Since 2011, we have continued to reform Wisconsin to the extent federal roadblocks would allow, and the citizens of our state are seeing the benefits. Our economy is strong, unemployment is down, real wages are up, and state government is more efficient - but we can do more,” said Senator Craig. “I look forward to working with our federal partners to give power and flexibility back to the states as intended in the Constitution.”

The attached letter cites many of the larger federal programs which spawn increasingly burdensome regulations and unfunded mandates which hamper Wisconsin’s economy and stifle the ability of individuals to make better lives for themselves and their families.

In conjunction with the release of the Governor’s “Wisconsin Works for Everyone” welfare reform package, the Legislators are seeking relief from requirements surrounding our administration of public assistance programs.

“Fifty years of fighting poverty demonstrates that the one-size fits all approach the federal government takes to reduce poverty does not work. As those struggling to make ends meet face unique hurdles, they need innovative and tailored solutions. Underprivileged families will be best served under a federalist approach, in which states are given the latitude to test new ideas and learn from one another how to best address poverty,” said Senator Kapenga.

This letter was set in response to Congressman Chaffetz’s request of state leaders across the country to provide areas the federal government which could be improved to provide states the freedoms which have been continually ceded to an ever-expanding federal government.

“In many ways our hands have been tied by the Feds. We now have an opportunity to see real reforms come out of Washington which would give us the freedom and flexibility to continue Wisconsin’s march FORWARD,” said the Senators.

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January 20, 2017

The Honorable Jason Chaffetz
Chairman
House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6143

Dear Congressman Chaffetz:

Thank you for the opportunity to engage with you and your committee to find impactful reforms of government to foster better stewardship at all levels and allow the private sector economy to flourish.

As state policy-makers, we are consistently contacted by constituents and business leaders about the cost of compliance of unfunded mandates and burdensome federal regulations. When developing policy solutions at the state level, we are continually stymied by federal rules preventing us from solving important problems. The most common area of burdensome regulations arise out of requirements tied to federal funding.

We have felt the effects of federal government's use of this cooperative federalism to lure nonfederal entities into accepting federal dollars only to tie their hands with additional unfunded mandates and "strings attached" regulations. This insidious use of federal funds has resulted in the loss of local control, increased cost for compliance and delivery of services, and expanded the size and scope of bureaucracy at all levels to the detriment of the private sector and taxpayers.

We would generally request that funding delegated back to the states be free from costly and burdensome restrictions so that Wisconsinites can achieve better schools, roads, and services for the dollar. More specifically, the following areas present the biggest opportunities for relief:

- The EPA's Administration of the Clean Air Act
- The EPA's Administration of the Clean Water Act
- The EPA's Administration of the Clean Power Plan
- Davis-Bacon Prevailing Wage
- Federal Transit Union Protections
- HUD Mandates on Composition of Neighborhoods
- Title 9 Mandates for Schools
- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
- Nutrition Standards in the School Lunch Program
- Dodd-Frank Regulations
- TANF Implementation Restrictions
- Medicaid & SNAP Administration Restrictions
- Wood Heater Restrictions
- Federal Unemployment Law Restrictions

By no means is this an exhaustive list but the issues presented are perpetual problems which negatively impact Wisconsinites in our children's schools, our morning commutes, when starting or growing our businesses, and when trying to find the money to make ends meet in an economy stifled by regulation and unfunded mandates. We are encouraged by the potential for real reforms to come from Washington which would unshackle state and local officials to realize substantive savings and provide relief to taxpayers who have shouldered the tax burden of an over-bearing federal government.

A final area on which we have been working in Wisconsin pertains to the 150+ federal welfare programs that flow through the states for administration. We request that Congress block grant this funding to Wisconsin. This would allow significant reduction in the federal bureaucracy and provide us the flexibility and freedom to implement policies that greater encourage work for those receiving public benefits.

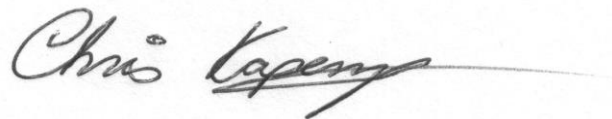
As we move forward with our legislative session here in Wisconsin, we will continue examine more closely the real costs and impacts of specific unfunded mandates, federal regulations, and the requirements attached to federal funding sent to the states.

Should you have any questions or need further information please send correspondence to Sen.Craig@legis.wisconsin.gov or call (608) 266-5400 or Sen.Kapenga@legis.wisconsin.gov or (608) 266-9174. We look forward to continuing this dialog and partnership to foster better stewardship of tax dollars and allow our private sector economy to reach its highest potential.

Sincerely,



Senator David Craig
Chairman
Senate Committee on Financial Service, Constitution & Federalism



Senator Chris Kapenga
Chairman
Senate Committee on Public Benefit, Licensing & State-Federal Relations