



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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NEWS RELEASE:
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Restoring Recycling Grants Proves Beneficial for Wisconsin Residents

When the Department of Natural Resources' 2016 Recycling Grant Award Program was defunded by \$4 million dollars, Senator Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay) and Representative Paul Tittl (R-Manitowoc) responded by announcing legislation to partially remedy the reduced funding. This bill, which was signed into law by Governor Walker on April 26th, restored \$3 of the \$4 million defunded by a provision in the 2015-2017 budget. With the reinstated money in the program, local units of government have been receiving their grant awards over the past 2 weeks.

"Recycling in Wisconsin is not only important in waste reduction," stated Senator Cowles, "but it makes economic sense. Building additional landfills or increasing the size of existing landfills should not be prioritized over revamping our successful recycling program."

"I was pleased to work with Senator Cowles on this important legislation," said Rep. Tittl. "As a former county board chairman and city council president, I am familiar with the day-to-day operations and challenges that local communities face, and I know the positive impact this legislation will have."

The Recycling Grant Program provides \$19 million in assistance to municipalities and counties that provide recycling services to Wisconsin's 5.7 million residents, with the majority of those funds coming from garbage disposal fees. Recycling has been found to be cheaper than garbage disposal in many instances. An efficient recycler costs as little as \$71 per ton, while garbage disposal costs bottom out at \$102 per ton.

"The recycling grants are the only thing standing between Wisconsin families and increased property taxes or user fees to pay for their recycling services. By continuing the program, we can ensure that their hard-earned money stays in their pocket as Wisconsinites continue to reduce waste in landfills," affirmed Senator Cowles.

"On behalf of the communities of Brown County and our Tri-County partners, we would like to thank Senator Cowles continued support in ensuring recycling programs are successful, especially at this time when commodity prices are low," stated Dean Haen, Director of the Brown County Port & Resource Recovery Department. "The recycling grant program helps ensure communities across the state are able to collect and deliver recyclable material to our facility."

Meleesa Johnson, President of the Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin also expressed her gratitude to Senator Cowles. "This financial support is important to help local units of government reduce costs of recycling and provide educational programs," Johnson stated. "Having a legislator who understands and appreciates the cost-savings and waste reduction benefits that recycling provides is paramount in our efforts to serve Wisconsin residents."

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