

Rep. Vruwink: Appointed to Study Committee on School Trust Funds

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The co-chairs of the Joint Legislative Council appointed State Rep. Don Vruwink (D-Milton) to a study committee that will make recommendations on the investment and use of school trust funds.

“I look forward to serving on this study committee to learn what we can do to use school trust fund lands for the maximum benefit for Wisconsin citizens,” Vruwink said.

The study committee is directed to review the investment of the trust funds administered by the Board of Commissioner of Public Lands, including loan programs.

The Board of Commissioners of Public Lands is Wisconsin’s oldest state agency. Nearly all of the school trust lands were sold over 100 years ago. The proceeds went into the school trust funds, which continue to grow with revenue from unclaimed property and timber production on School Trust Lands.

“The intent of the School Trust Funds was to fund public schools from the sale of lands that were granted to Wisconsin by the U.S. government,” Vruwink said. “I want to make sure public education continues to be a priority.”

Today, School Trust Funds investment income goes to public school libraries – a total of \$32.1 million during fiscal year 2017. The Board also makes loans to municipalities and school districts for public purpose projects – nearly \$122 million during that same time period.

The school Trust Funds contribute to Wisconsin's sustainable timber economy, combat forest fragmentation, and secure public access to large blocks of northern forests.