

U.S. Sens. Baldwin and Ernst: Introduce bipartisan legislation to improve transportation access for workers and families

Posted on Tuesday, Mar 5, 2019

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Bipartisan reform expands resources to help solve mobility challenges and boost economic opportunity

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Joni Ernst (R-IA) today introduced bipartisan legislation to improve transportation access and help break down barriers for workers and families getting to jobs, local businesses and health care services. The *Connecting Opportunities through Mobility Metrics and Unlocking Transportation Efficiencies (COMMUTE) Act* provides data to states and local governments to measure accessibility to local businesses and important destinations, and inform investments in transportation systems.

“In Wisconsin and across the country, inadequate or unaffordable transportation options can be a significant barrier to employment and hold potential workers back from pursuing job opportunities and helping grow our economy,” **said Senator Baldwin.** “At the same time, employers, particularly those located just outside metro areas and in rural communities, may be missing out on potential workers. This bipartisan legislation is about investing in innovative and efficient transportation so workers and families can get to job hubs, health care services and other important destinations, and keep our Made in Wisconsin economy moving

forward.”

“Dependable transportation, especially for lowans in rural areas, is a fundamental part of life—from getting to and from work every day, to having access to a local grocery store, school, or health care center. The more commuter data our local leaders have, the more effectively they can plan investments into our communities’ transportation infrastructure. Those local investments translate to more job opportunities and better access to critical resources for lowans,” **said Senator Ernst.**

The *COMMUTE Act* requires the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to develop and provide states and transportation planning organizations with data sets measuring the level of access by all modes of transportation to important destinations. These destinations include jobs and areas with a concentration of available jobs, health care facilities, childcare services, educational and workforce training facilities, affordable housing and food sources.

Companion legislation was introduced in the House today by Representatives Mark DeSaulnier (D-CA) and Jon Curtis (R-UT). The bill is supported by Transportation For America, the Coalition for Smarter Transportation and the League of American Bicyclists.

Data tools can help inform transportation planning decisions about improved access to opportunity for residents—particularly for individuals without reliable access to cars. These new tools allow states and transportation planners to assess changes in access, evaluate how transportation dollars are spent and set targets. Making information about where jobs and other important destinations are located and where transportation access can be made more convenient can better inform locally-driven decisions about how to most effectively invest transportation resources and design with access in mind.

More information about the legislation is available [here](#).

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