

U.S. Rep. Kind: Receives WECA's Champion of Electric Cooperatives Award

Posted on Thursday, Oct 8, 2020

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

La Crosse, WI— Today, **Rep. Ron Kind** announced that he received the Champion of Electric Cooperatives Award from the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association (WECA). WECA's Champion of Electric Cooperatives Award is presented to legislators on both sides of the aisle who demonstrate extraordinary service to Wisconsin's electric cooperatives. This award [recognizes](#) Rep. Kind for his advocacy for electric cooperatives and the communities across Wisconsin they power.

"I'm honored to have received WECA's Champion of Electric Cooperatives Award," said **Rep. Ron Kind**. "Electric cooperatives power our rural economies and ensure that communities across Wisconsin have access to reliable and affordable electricity. I will continue to work across the aisle to support all the great work our electric cooperatives do to keep Wisconsin moving forward and our local economies competitive."

"Rep. Kind has proven to be a consistent advocate for Wisconsin electric cooperatives and a valued partner for his ability to get things done in our nation's capital," said **Stephen J. Freese, Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association President and CEO**. "WECA is proud to honor Rep. Kind with our highest award, and we appreciate all he has done on behalf of the industry to ensure electric cooperatives can continue to supply members with safe, reliable, and affordable electricity."

Rep. Kind has been a longtime supporter of electric cooperatives and the work they

do to power rural communities and economies across Wisconsin. Rep. Kind was a leader in the passage of the [SECURE Act](#), which included several provisions he authored including one that immediately reduced pension premiums for cooperatives, and saved their members in Wisconsin over \$700,000 annually. Rep. Kind was also a key supporter of the RURAL Act, the Flexible Financing for Rural America Act, and the Keeping Critical Connections Act, which also include provisions to support electric cooperatives and rural Wisconsin.

Rep. Kind has also fought to ensure electric cooperatives receive the relief they need throughout the COVID-19 crisis. In May, Rep. Kind [voted](#) for the *HEROES Act* which included priorities for electrical cooperatives, such as expanding Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) eligibility to electric cooperatives and providing loan forgiveness flexibility under the PPP, as well as funding for rural broadband deployment. Additionally, in April, Rep. Kind sent a bipartisan [letter](#) to the Department of the Treasury demanding that immediate clarity be provided on rural electric cooperatives' eligibility for the PPP. Following this, the Small Business Administration issued an Interim Final Rule that ensured electric cooperatives are eligible borrowers under the PPP.

Rep. Kind is a member of the Ways and Means Committee, the most powerful – and the oldest – committee in the House of Representatives. It has jurisdiction over tax measures, the management of public debt, trade and tariff laws, Social Security, Medicare, pensions, and many other economic growth measures.

Attached is a photo of Rep. Kind with (from left to right): Former Dairyland Power Cooperative Vice President of Government and Community Relations Brian Rude, Dairyland Power Cooperative President and CEO Brent Ridge, WECA President and CEO Steve Freese, Dairyland Power Cooperative Government Relations Manager Jennifer Shilling.