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WEDC: Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission on Rural Prosperity to hold final listening session on Sept. 16

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MADISON, SEPT. 14, 2020 –The Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission on Rural Prosperity will hold its final virtual listening session on Wednesday, Sept. 16, from 3 to 5 p.m. for residents to share ideas and experiences about what it will take to advance rural prosperity for all in Wisconsin.

The commission is asking people who want to share their comments to register in advance by visiting the Office of Rural Prosperity website, which will be open for sign-ups until the session starts at 3 p.m. Interpretation in Hmong and Spanish is also available for the forum.

"Before they can develop a plan for rural Wisconsin's future, commission members want to hear from people about what they believe their communities need most to succeed," said Kelliann Blazek, director of the Office of Rural Prosperity at the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC). "We know many residents who might want to speak to the commission are busy with work and other responsibilities, so we have offered listening sessions at a variety of days and times to accommodate their schedules, and are also accepting written comments via the website. The commission wants to make it as easy as possible for everyone to participate in this important process."

Wednesday's event is the last of three listening sessions by the commission. In addition to the listening sessions, residents may join the discussion by submitting written comments by Sept. 30 on the Office of Rural Prosperity website. Rural

stakeholder groups may also arrange meetings with commission members through WEDC.

The listening session will be streamed live online for those who register for the event, and may also be available on WisconsinEye, if their schedule permits.

Governor Tony Evers established both the commission and the Office of Rural Prosperity in his State of the State message in January. The governor asked the commission to engage and learn from residents throughout the state in order to develop long-term strategies that will “best support the needs of rural Wisconsinites and rural communities.”

The commission aims to collect public input early this fall and then present Governor Evers with a report by Oct. 31 that will help shape the governor’s state budget proposal next year.

More information about the commission, its members and its activities is available at the Office of Rural Prosperity website: wedc.org/rural-prosperity.