

GOP bill would establish gas station fuel blend requirements, DATCP grant program

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GOP lawmakers are circulating legislation that would establish new fuel blend requirements for gas stations and create a related grant program under DATCP.

In a recent cosponsorship memo, Sen. Joan Ballweg of Markesan and Rep. Todd Novak of Dodgeville touted the bill as a way to support Wisconsin farmers and biofuels producers.

It would require new retail or wholesale fueling facilities built on vacant land to ensure gas storage and dispensing equipment can handle a gasoline-ethanol fuel blend containing at least 25 percent ethanol by volume, according to a Legislative Reference Bureau analysis. Plus, equipment for storing or dispensing petroleum-based diesel fuel would have to accommodate a fuel blend containing at least 20 percent biodiesel by volume.

Plus, DATCP would be required to provide grants of up to \$1,000 for each new dispenser or the increased cost to retrofit dispensers to meet the new requirement, whichever is less. The total amount would be capped at \$15,000 per facility. DATCP would also be required to offer grants to existing fuel stations to support the storage or dispensing of these ethanol and biodiesel fuel blends, covering up to 50 percent of the project cost.

Gas stations that have gotten federal dollars for the same purpose would be excluded from the grant program, LRB notes in the memo.

“Wisconsin farmers will benefit, since ethanol provides additional value to their crop,” the lawmakers wrote in the memo. “According to the Renewable Fuels Association, a typical ethanol plant adds about 40% to every bushel of corn processed. Ultimately, Wisconsin consumers will also benefit by seeing cheaper prices at the pump when using ethanol-blended gas.”

The cosponsorship deadline is 5 p.m. Friday.

See the memo:

<https://www.wisconsinlobbyists.com/resources/Co-Sponsorship%20Memos/9.1.2023/LRB-4240%20Fuel%20Blend%20Requirements%20for%20New%20Gas%20Stations,%20Grants%20for%20Fuel%20Blend%20Compatibility%20Improvements%20Memo.pdf>