

Howard Marklein: Recognizing the workforce of the 17th Senate District

Posted on Friday, Sep 1, 2023

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As we celebrate Labor Day and enjoy the very hot, but fleeting, days of summer, I want to take a moment to recognize the workforce of the 17th Senate District. The workers who live in our community are some of the hardest working, committed, skilled individuals in the entire state of Wisconsin. Thank you for dedicating your time and talents to the employers in our communities. Thank you to the employers who recognize the value of employing the people of the 17th Senate District.

The most recent unemployment rate analysis from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) lists Lafayette County as the lowest unemployment rate in the state for July 2023 at 2.2%. Lafayette County is almost always one of the counties with the lowest rate.

But Lafayette County is not alone. Iowa County and Sauk County are both at 2.5% and ranked fourth and fifth in the state. Green County is not far behind with 2.6% and is 8th in the state. Out of the top 8 counties with low unemployment, the 17th Senate District holds four positions!

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This is not to say that our other counties are in bad shape. Vernon County has 2.7% unemployment, Grant is 2.9%, Juneau and Richland are very close with a 3.1% unemployment rate.

These numbers are a very good indicator that we have a strong, committed, willing workforce and jobs to fill. It is no wonder that employers are working hard to recruit and retain employees in our communities. There is definitely a shortage of workers

for a lot of jobs.

Why is the 17th Senate District workforce so strong? I don't have data to back this up, but I believe that our workforce strength is due to the work ethic of the families who live in our communities. I also believe that our strength is learned around our kitchen tables and in our very good school systems, both K-12 and higher education, where our workers are trained and taught.

I think workers, of all ages, want to live in our communities, raise families and grow roots. We live in a wonderful part of the world. We have safe neighborhoods, decent roads, amenities, resources and activities that you cannot find in other parts of the state.

I also think that our employers are working hard to make the most of our workforce and offer opportunities for growth, advancement and good pay.

There will always be more that we can do to support our workers in Wisconsin. I remain committed to cutting income taxes, growing our communities, increasing modern amenities and protecting our rural way of life. I believe that these are some of the basic ways we can ensure that our local workforce continues to thrive.

As we reflect on this Labor Day, send our kids back to school and enjoy cooler weather (eventually), please join me in recognizing all of the workers who support our communities. From farmers to public school teachers to manufacturers to road builders to grocery store clerks to semi drivers; every one of us contributes to the workforce. Thank you for your service!

-Marklein, R-Spring Green, is co-chair of the Joint Finance Committee and represents the 17th Senate District.