



HOWARD MARKLEIN

STATE SENATOR • 17TH SENATE DISTRICT

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Marklein Authors Bill for \$9.7 Million Increase to Sparsity Aid

Bill provides additional support for rural school districts.

MADISON – State Senator Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green) joined Governor Scott Walker today to announce that he has authored a bill with a \$9.7 million increase to the Sparsity Aid program for rural schools. The bill mirrors the increase that was removed from the Governor’s budget proposal by the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) during budget deliberations. The bill is co-authored by Representative Jeff Mursau (R-Crivitz) and will be circulated for co-sponsorship later this week.

“Sparsity Aid is an important funding program that helps small, rural school districts,” Marklein said. “This bill invests \$9.7 million for the 2018-19 school year and will increase sparsity aid from \$300 to \$400 per pupil. It also creates a second tier for slightly larger school districts who will receive \$100 per pupil. This is a good investment in schools that need our support.”

School districts with fewer than 745 students and less than 10 pupils per square mile currently qualify for \$300 per pupil in sparsity aid. Governor Walker’s original budget proposal increased the reimbursement to \$400 per pupil in both years of the current biennium. It also created a second tier for schools with 746-1000 students.

On August 28, 2017, the JFC removed the sparsity aid increases from the state budget. Other programs and allocations were made with these funds by the committee and passed by both houses of the legislature. Governor Walker vetoed several of these programs and allocations, which freed funding to be invested in the sparsity aid program.

“In August, I spoke out against the changes to sparsity aids because the majority of school districts in the 17th District were negatively impacted by these changes. Overall, there was a \$2.2 million impact with 25 of 33 school districts receiving less categorical aid than they would have under the Governor’s plan,” Marklein said. “I appreciate Governor Walker’s continued support for rural schools. He has demonstrated a strong understanding for the challenges we face throughout the state and is willing to promote solutions.”

“This bill provides rural schools with support that they desperately need,” Marklein said. “I am proud to champion this bill and look forward to working with my colleagues to move it through the legislative process.”

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