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# HOWARD MARKLEIN

STATE SENATOR • 17<sup>TH</sup> SENATE DISTRICT

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Marklein's Rural School Funding Bill Passes Joint Finance Committee**

*Amendment to help the Darlington School District also approved by the committee.*

MADISON – State Senator Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green) thanked his colleagues on the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) for their approval of Senate Bill (SB) 690 to increase sparsity aid funding for rural schools and to increase the revenue limit ceiling for low spending school districts with an amendment to enable the Darlington School District to benefit from the legislation.

Senate Bill (SB) 690 was introduced on January 10, 2018 with strong support in both houses of the legislature. It is coauthored by Representative John Nygren (R-Marinette). Governor Scott Walker has also championed the legislation.

SB 690 will increase sparsity aid from \$300 to \$400 per pupil for the 2018-19 school year, an estimated \$6 million boost for rural schools. In addition, this proposal also increases the low revenue ceiling from \$9,100 to \$9,400 for the 2018-19 school year, with the low revenue ceiling rising by \$100 per year thereafter up to \$9,800 by the 2022-23 school year. School districts who have had a failed referendum within the last three years would be ineligible for the low revenue ceiling increase.

“I introduced an amendment today to relieve an unnecessary, unintended burden on the Darlington School District,” Marklein said. “Darlington had a failed referendum on April 5, 2016, but then subsequently passed a referendum on August 9, 2016. However, the original legislation would have disqualified Darlington from raising their low revenue ceiling because of the original failed referendum. My amendment makes an adjustment to the bill that will allow them to raise their ceiling without returning to the voters a third time. It is common sense. The voters have already said ‘yes’ and that is what is important.”

Sen. Marklein has consistently championed increases to the sparsity aid program, as well as increased funding for K-12 public education overall. He [spoke out against making changes to the Governor's increase for sparsity aid during the budget process](#) and [introduced legislation to restore these changes in October](#). SB 690 has a similar impact on school districts throughout the state with new benefits for low-spending school districts.

“Sparsity Aid is an important funding program that helps 22 of the 33 school districts in the 17<sup>th</sup> Senate District with fewer than 745 students and less than 10 pupils per square mile. The change to the low revenue ceiling will impact six school districts in the 17<sup>th</sup> Senate District as well, including one district that does not qualify for sparsity aid,” Marklein said.

“SB 690 enhances the historic \$11.5 billion investment in K-12 funding in the biennial budget by providing additional support for rural schools,” Marklein said. “I am proud to champion good policy on behalf of the school districts I serve.”

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