

Rural Policy Institute

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RPI Releases an Executive Summary Highlighting the Substantial Rural Population of Wisconsin

[MADISON] - The Rural Policy Institute (RPI) announces the release of the executive summary of a forthcoming report, "*Rural-Urban Balance in Wisconsin*," which reveals how Wisconsin remains a very rural state.

This study marks the first use of a quantitative measure to define areas of the state as rural, rural adjacent, suburban, or urban. The study also highlights recent growth in rural populations. Currently, Wisconsin's population is 41% Rural or Rural Adjacent, 19% Suburban, and 40% Urban.

"As legislators begin their new terms, it's essential they recognize that Wisconsin is a largely rural state, and policymakers on both sides of the aisle must understand the significant presence of rural areas in their districts," said Bob Welch, Executive Director of the Rural Policy Institute. "This summary previews a broader conversation about ensuring rural voices are heard and represented effectively in state policy."

The study also points out that under the new legislative maps there are a greater number of districts with significant rural influence, providing rural communities with potentially increased representation from both political parties.

The full report, which will be published later this year, examines how rural areas have grown in recent years and how the rural-urban balance has shifted under the new maps.

Interested partners, community leaders, and policymakers are encouraged to review the findings to understand the implications for rural Wisconsin's future. A high-resolution file of the map in the executive summary is available upon request.

If you would like to learn more about the Rural Policy Institute or explore partnership opportunities, please visit ruralpolicyinstitute.org. Your support is vital in creating a balanced future for rural Wisconsin.

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The Rural Policy Institute was formed in 2024 by the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation, the Wisconsin Towns Association, Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association and The Welch Group.