

Sample E-mail to Legislators: TEA Grant Enhancement Act (LRB-0728)

E-mail Subject Line: Please Co-Sponsor LRB-0728 – *The TEA Grant Enhancement Act*

Dear Senator/Representative _____:

As your constituent and an economic development professional, I am writing to ask you to co-sponsor LRB-0728. The bipartisan legislative proposal would enhance the Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA) Grant program, which is a key economic development tool. The bill would ensure the TEA grant program continues to provide grant funding for job retention, and not just for newly created jobs.

The TEA Grant program, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT), was created in 1987 to provide funding for transportation improvements critical to economic development projects in Wisconsin. Since its inception, the program has awarded over 350 grants statewide totaling more than \$110 million. In addition, TEA Grants have helped fund road, rail, harbor and airport projects that have resulted in the creation of over 27,000 new jobs and the retention of more than 19,000 jobs.

The program offers grants that provide \$5,000 per job created or retained, up to 50% of the total cost of the transportation improvement project. Individual grants are capped at \$1 million and require a 50% local match from a community or business.

Roughly two years ago, after a legal review of the program, the DOT determined it did not possess the statutory authority to provide grant funding for jobs retained and could only support projects that create new jobs. Unfortunately, this change has diminished the value of TEA Grants as an economic development tool. It is also in direct conflict Wisconsin's growing workforce shortage that makes it necessary for state programs and policies to recognize the importance of job retention.

LRB-0728 would restore the TEA Grant program's long history of awarding project funds for both job creation and job retention. The bill would not increase overall funding for the program.

In closing, I would again urge you to co-sponsor LRB-0728. The bill is being authored by Senators Jerry Petrowski and Tim Carpenter and Representative Romaine Quinn. The co-sponsorship period ends on Friday, June 28.

Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Name

Title

Home Address

Phone #