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WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

Senate Bill 118

April 30, 2015

Good morning, and thank you for the opportunity to speak today on Senate Bill 118.

Under current law, town boards are required to provide “machinery, implements, material, and equipment needed to construct, maintain, and repair the highways and bridges” within their jurisdiction [s. 82.03(2)]. The statutes go on to limit the town boards from spending more than the product of \$5,000 multiplied by the miles of highway under the town’s jurisdiction.

As many of you know, town boards set an annual budget and hold a meeting of the town’s electors to vote on the budget. Over the course of the year, if a town needs to exceed the amount allotted for road repair, the board must notice a meeting of the board and hold another meeting of the electors to approve the change. This process may take over a month or two to accomplish, simply to exceed an arbitrary limit. Town boards are the only unit of local government to which this cumbersome requirement applies.

This bill seeks to repeal that requirement. Town boards would still call a meeting of the electors to approve an annual budget; under the bill, however, town boards would have the ability, if necessary, to modify their budget during the course of the year by a vote of the board while still adhering to levy limit requirements.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak on this bill. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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