



DAVE MURPHY

State Representative • 56th Assembly District

TO: Members of the Senate Committee on Universities and Technical Colleges
RE: Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 594
DATE: February 17, 2016

Members of the Senate Committee on Universities and Technical Colleges, thank you for hearing my testimony in support of Senate Bill 594.

This bill uses \$200,000 of existing Fast Forward money to provide 2 FTE positions at the Department of Workforce Development to hire internship coordinators. The role of these coordinators will be to work with all higher education institutions in the state to connect them with Wisconsin employers to create internship opportunities.

We hear from businesses and our partners in higher education that many small-medium size companies, in particular, do not have the ability to have an internship program. These coordinators will be able to serve as liaisons between the businesses and higher education institutions and improve the pipeline from graduation to employment.

According to Nancy O'Neil from the Association of American College & Universities, internships are a proven practice that connects students with employers, improves learning outcomes, and allows students to hone skills outside of the classroom to lead to employment post-graduation. Interns also benefit the business community because they are eager to learn, can be trained by the business, and provide a talented pool of potential employees.

Internships also help keep students in Wisconsin after graduation when they lead to employment, which will help reduce the brain-drain. The National Association of Colleges and Employers reports from a national survey that, "overall, employers reported (July 2015) converting an average of 51.7 percent of their eligible interns into full-time hires, in line with the 51.2 percent conversion rate reported in the 2014 iteration of the survey."

This proposal will make a dent in student loans because we know from research that students who have difficulty paying back student loans are the ones who don't complete their degree or have gainful employment after graduation. The more internship opportunities available will connect more students with Wisconsin employers and help students succeed in their college career.

I hope that you support this bill that will increase internship opportunities for Wisconsin students. Thank you for your time and consideration of this bill.

Senate Committee on Universities and Technical Colleges
February 17, 2016
Testimony on SB 594, Provided by Georgia Maxwell, Deputy Secretary

Chairperson Harsdorf and members of the Committee, I am Georgia Maxwell, the Deputy Secretary for the Department of Workforce Development, and I come before you today to testify in support of Senate Bill 594.

Let me start by saying, Representative Murphy and Senator Marklein, thank you for authoring this bill. We appreciate your willingness to address the issue of getting students ready for the workforce. Along with you, the Department understands the need to get youth connected with employment. To illustrate the need to get students engaged in the workforce, a study by McKinsey & Company found that of 4,900 college graduates, 1/3 felt that they were under-prepared for the world of work. In addition, 65% of employers stated that they never or very infrequently engage with providers.

Under the leadership of Governor Walker and the Legislature, DWD addressing this issue. Your support of Youth Apprenticeship has helped us build awareness in K-12 of Apprenticeship Careers; assist school districts to include Youth Apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship in their Education for Employment (E4E) plans; and ensure K-12 students have access to effective materials on apprenticeship careers meeting their academic and career plan goals. We've also been able to expand effective adult apprenticeship models to additional industries, occupations, employers, and apprentices.

Through the Office of Skills Development that was made possible through your support of the Governor's Wisconsin Fast Forward worker training program, we have been working with employers to identify their needs and develop innovative, employer-led training programs through a competitive grant process.

By extending this flexibility to a thoughtful and well-coordinated internship program as proposed by the Governor, Representative Murphy and Senator Marklein, we will further align workforce development with education. Specifically, this bill will give the Department the ability to help connect employers to students at universities, technical colleges and businesses, who collectively represent our future talent pool.

With the Legislature's support, we will create new opportunities for students to experience firsthand what the workplace is like for their chosen career path. Students will develop workplace skills and build a foundation for future employment success. Additionally, this initiative will enable more students to build or expand a network with potential future employers and coworkers, providing more opportunities for mentorship, professional references and resume-building experiences.

The Department will build upon the success of existing internship programs and pursue new opportunities for students to apply classroom knowledge to the workplace. We will seek ideas and feedback from our partners in higher education and businesses. Then we will develop a customized internship program that we believe will become another best-practice model among workforce development systems across the nation.

Thank you again for your time and for your previous support of helping to address our state's need to connect employers with our existing talent pool. I am happy to answer any questions the committee may have at this time.