

Education Committee Hearing on AB 835.

Chairman Thiesfeldt and members of the education committee, I would like to echo my thanks for the opportunity for us to speak in strong support of AB 835. My name is Mike Trimberger and I have the honor to be the superintendent in the School District of Random Lake. Much like you heard earlier from my colleagues in Sheboygan County, we support AB 835. As a representative of the School District of Random Lake, I would like to take a quick moment to speak more specifically about Sparsity Aid.

The School District of Random Lake is one of the many frugal district in Southeastern Wisconsin. With a \$9,200 per pupil allocation we know about tight budgets. As of second Friday, we have 793 student and 90 square miles giving us a sparsity density of 8.8 students per square mile. Of the 793 students, 85% of our population qualify for transportation.

As you can imagine, being a frugal district in a high transportation situation is not optimal for our students. After salaries and benefits, we have about \$1.5 million to pay for everything else. Of that \$1.5 million, nearly $\frac{1}{3}$ goes to pay for transportation giving our students far less money in the classroom when compared to district with more dense population.

Sparsity Aid as currently written will widen the gap between the haves and the have nots in the state. As a district with a \$9,200 per pupil allocation, there are districts in the state that have nearly twice our allocation and also get Sparsity Aide. I ask that you reconsider the current maximum of 745 students to qualify for sparsity aid. The definition of Sparsity is the “property of being scattered or an overall lack of denseness.” In the state of Wisconsin we have defined Sparse in schools as 10 students or fewer per square mile. Random Lake fits in the definition of sparse and should not be disqualified by having 50 students too many.

I know that we do not have endless budgets. But I also know that one group of students SHOULD NOT BE WORTH LESS THAN ANOTHER. I ask that you lift the 745 student limit on the Sparsity Aid and go with the true definition of Sparse by funding districts with less than 10 students per square mile.

I appreciate Governor Walker’s support of AB 835 and each of your time in this proposal. This is a great step in the right direction and wanted to offer another perspective on this proposal. I welcome the opportunity to answer questions and talk further regarding either the Per Pupil Allocations or Sparsity Aid as it relates to the School District of Random Lake.

Thank you for your time,

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