



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Senator Ellis Should Insist Assembly
Pass Senate Bill 174 without Amendments**

*Bill would require full public debate and vote of the legislature
in order to expand voucher schools*

(Madison) – Responding to recent statements made by state Senator Mike Ellis (R-Neenah) in which he referred to Preble High School in Green Bay as a “sewer” and discussed plans to bring voucher schools to a portion of the Green Bay School District, state Senator Dave Hansen (D-Green Bay) called on Senator Ellis to use his considerable power, experience and skills to pass legislation that would prohibit the expansion of voucher schools outside of Milwaukee and Racine unless approved by the full legislature.

“I think Green Bay schools, including Preble High School are among the best in the state. And I am surprised that Senator Ellis, who I respect, would make such intemperate and hurtful comments,” said Hansen whose district includes Preble High School.

But, Senator Hansen said he is also concerned that the comments cast light on concerns that others have had that, despite the legislation introduced by Senator Ellis, the ultimate goal of Republican leaders has been and continues to be the expansion of voucher schools into Green Bay.

“Last summer and fall Senator Ellis said he was opposed to expanding voucher schools into Green Bay and that any such decision to should happen only after a full debate and vote of the legislature,” said Senator Hansen. “I took him at his word and signed on to his bill because I thought he was sincere and because I think when it comes to that kind of decision there should be a full public debate. Now I’m not sure what to think.”

Senator Hansen said the best way to alleviate the concerns caused by Senator Ellis’s comments is for the state Assembly to quickly pass Senate Bill 174, which he co-sponsored with Senator Ellis, without amendments and for the Governor to sign it into law.

“Senator Ellis was right last fall when he said that the expansion of voucher schools is too important to be decided in back rooms and that any expansion should be the subject of full public debate and legislative approval. I believe he has the ability to see this thing through and make sure SB-174 is passed in the Assembly without amendments and signed into law. And I hope as I’m sure many others do that he will take this opportunity to make it happen.”

SB-174 passed the state Senate on a voice vote on October 25th but wasn’t referred to an Assembly Committee until December 1st where it was referred to the Assembly Rules Committee.