



JEFF SMITH

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR – 31ST DISTRICT



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 14th, 2019

CONTACT: Meghan Sovey

meghan.sovey@legis.wi.gov
608-266-8546

Sen. Smith Rolls Back Harsh Penalties for Local Road Budgets

MADISON – Today, Senator Jeff Smith (D-Brunswick) and Representative Joan Ballweg (R-Markesan) introduced bipartisan legislation (LRB 1106/1) to lower late penalties for local governments applying for road aids.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) administers a general transportation aids program to help our local cities, villages and towns afford costly road construction and maintenance. Each year, local governments are required to submit reports to the DOT before March 15th, so the department can determine how much local governments receive from the State of Wisconsin.

Under current law, local governments lose 1% of their total aid amount per day if reports are not received before March 15th. The maximum penalty is 10% of the total aid amount received. LRB 1106/1 changes the penalty for towns to only \$100 per day if submitting late reports to DOT.

“As a former Brunswick Town Board Chair, I understand how local governments have to stretch every dollar they receive from taxpayers,” said Senator Smith. “Local governments have been cut to the bone and cannot afford overly harsh penalties assessed on state transportation dollars. This simple change will help our local officials receive the aid they deserve and the aid they desperately need for maintaining Wisconsin’s rural roads.”

Tomorrow is the deadline for Wisconsin’s local municipalities to submit their reports. The introduction of this bill comes at an important time, highlighting these harsh penalties and the need for reform. LRB 1106/1 was circulated to representatives and senators to sign on as co-sponsors.

“This simple change supported by Democrats and Republicans will make a big difference for our hardworking town officials.”

The 31st Senate District includes all of Buffalo and Pepin counties, portions of Trempealeau, Pierce, Dunn, Eau Claire, Chippewa and Jackson counties and very small portions of Chippewa and St. Croix counties.

###