



For Immediate Release

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WSTA honors Senator Howard Marklein for leadership on rural broadband

Madison, WI - Wisconsin's premier telecommunications industry association recognized Senator Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green) for his strong leadership and support of policies to promote rural broadband expansion and partnerships between communities, broadband providers and key stakeholders. Senator Marklein received the Wisconsin State Telecommunications Association (WSTA) Excellence in Legislative Leadership Award earlier this week at the 2018 WSTA Fall Conference.

"Senator Marklein is a rural broadband MVP and a true champion for improving the quality of life in rural communities through broadband expansion and economic development," said Bill Esbeck, WSTA executive director. "In partnership with WSTA and our rural members, the Senator is expanding rural broadband access and authoring first-in-the-nation initiatives like the Telecommuter Forward! certification law."

"I am honored to be recognized by the WSTA for my work with them on Rural Broadband Expansion," Senator Marklein said. "Broadband has been a top priority for me for the past four years. It is an essential part of our infrastructure and enables rural Wisconsin to connect and compete with the world. Our communities are terrific places to live, work and retire. In order to improve and enable this quality of life, our residents must be able to connect to the internet. We are making great progress, but there is more work to be done."

In the 2015-2016 Legislative Session, Senator Marklein authored the Broadband Forward! Community Certification law, which helps streamline local permitting for broadband projects. In 2016, Senator Marklein chaired the Legislative Council Rural Broadband Study Committee, which was a thoughtful, inclusive process to improve opportunities for rural broadband investment.

During the recent 2017-2018 Legislative Session, Senator Marklein authored Broadband Expansion Grant Program improvements and secured historic funding increases for the grant program as a member of the Joint Committee on Finance. Senator Marklein's leadership in the recent legislative session included authoring the Telecommuter Forward! Community Certification law, which is a first-in-the-nation initiative that will facilitate partnerships, job creation and economic activity through broadband usage.

"Brewers outfielder Christian Yelich isn't the only MVP who hits for the cycle," continued Esbeck. "With Senator Marklein's leadership on the Broadband Forward! certification law, Legislative Council Rural Broadband Study Committee, Broadband Expansion Grant Program updates and funding increases, and the Telecommuter Forward! certification law...Senator Marklein hit for the rural broadband cycle."

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