

TO: Legislative Colleagues

FROM: Senator Bob Wirch

DATE: May 8, 2025

RE: Co-Sponsorship of LRB-3074, Reinstatement of Prevailing Wage

**DEADLINE: May 23, 2025**

For decades, Wisconsin's prevailing wage law ensured that taxpayer-funded construction projects supported good-paying, family-supporting jobs for local workers. Repealed in 2015 and 2017, the elimination of prevailing wage shifted the balance in favor of low-wage, out-of-state contractors, weakening the quality, safety, and accountability of public infrastructure projects across the state.

This bill restores the core principles of fairness and economic responsibility to public works by requiring contractors on state-funded construction projects to pay workers wages and benefits comparable to local standards. It levels the playing field for Wisconsin businesses, encourages apprenticeship and workforce training, and protects taxpayer investments from being undercut by low-bid, low-road labor practices.

Many of our neighboring states, including Illinois, Michigan, and Minnesota, maintain strong prevailing wage laws to support skilled trades, ensure project quality, and protect public investments. Wisconsin workers and contractors deserve the same opportunity to compete on a level playing field, not a race to the bottom.

If we value high-quality work, skilled tradespeople, and local jobs, we must also value the labor standards that make them possible. Reinstating the prevailing wage is a critical step in restoring dignity to our construction workforce and rebuilding Wisconsin's middle class.

If you would like to co-sponsor LRB 3074, please reply to this email or contact Senator Wirch's office at (608-267-8979) by May 23, 2025.