



**Testimony of Representative Garey Bies  
Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities**

**AB 177- WI Technical College System**

Chairman Nass, committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Assembly Bill 177, which makes a number of substantive changes to Wisconsin's Technical College System.

I was elected to the legislature in 2000 and began working on this issue immediately because it's a topic of great concern to my district. In 2002, 8 municipalities entered into an intergovernmental agreement called the Door County's Municipal Taxpayer Commission in "...an effort to modify, reduce or eliminate the tax imposed for the support of the technical college system..."

Door County is considered property rich, but economically-challenged. In addition to that, the taxpayers in my district are asked to pay a considerable amount, yet they only have access to one tech college campus. This has been echoed by others all across the state. I've heard from folks stretching from Eagle River to Monroe. All concerned that they foot the bill for these schools, but the main campus and most of the programming isn't accessible to the people in their communities.

To put this in perspective, the 700 year-round residents who live on Washington Island are two hours away from the Campus in Sturgeon Bay and the tax levy for the Town was over a half-million dollars. The Town of Sevastopol, population 2600, was levied over \$1.1 million by the Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC) for 2012-2013. According to the town, that's twice the municipal levy, represents almost one-fourth of all their educational levies and amounts to nearly 14% of all tax levies. We can't continue to rely on property owners to fund these schools. We need a sustainable, long-term funding solution and we need a system that's accountable to the taxpayers.

Under this proposal, the Technical College System would be structured similar to the University of Wisconsin College System. Currently, the Technical College System operates with minimal oversight by the State of Wisconsin by un-elected board that has the ability to levy a tax on local residents. In the 2011-2012 fiscal year, 44 percent of tech college funding came from property taxes. Clearly, a blatant example of taxation without representation.

*First for Wisconsin!*

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All district employees, facilities, property, assets and liabilities would be transferred to the Wisconsin Technical College Board. Local boards would still exist, but would be limited to advising the district director who reports to the state board.

The system needs more accountability than it currently has. One only needs to look at Madison Area Technical College to see how a lack of oversight has led to questionable decision-making.

Despite concerns raised by the college's Vice President of Strategic Planning and the President of the part-time teachers union, MATC went forward with a referendum in 2010 and received approval for \$133.7 million to build new facilities. The new buildings are open, but enrollment is down (as it is at other tech colleges), full-time faculty positions have been cut, and MATC has a budget gap of \$5.2 million.

Under this bill, the state sales tax would be increased by one-cent. According to the Legislative Fiscal Bureau, raising the sales tax by one-cent would generate \$870 Million. This increase to GPR would cover the current operating and debt levy of the entire tech college system.

Wisconsin's sales tax is currently five percent. Raising the tax by one percent brings us to the same rate as Iowa (6%) and Michigan (6), but still below Illinois (6.25), Minnesota (6.875) and Indiana (7).

Opponents have said the bill is problematic because it doesn't specify that the sales tax funds would go directly to technical colleges. That is correct. The state doesn't typically reserve a particular GPR funding stream, it is up to the the legislature to determine a reasonable appropriation.

The final, and most important component of the bill, is it would require approval of voters through a statewide referendum. Wisconsin residents would have the final say as to whether funding for technical colleges should come from property taxes **or** the sales tax - which is paid by everyone, including visitors to our state.

Where I live in the town of Liberty Grove, 17% of my tax bill goes to tech colleges. Sawyer County the average is 10%, Madison it's 7% and Monroe is just under 7%.

Wisconsin's economy is headed in the right direction, but we continue to hear from Wisconsin businesses that they struggle to find qualified workers to fill vacant positions. Our technical colleges can play an important role in our state's economic growth and train individuals for these open positions, but it needs to be done transparently and not on the backs of property owners.

Once again thank you for the opportunity to testify on Assembly Bill 177.

Testimony for Public Hearing  
Committee on Colleges and Universities  
October 10, 2013

Michael A. Lanser, President  
Lakeshore Technical College  
1290 North Avenue  
Cleveland, WI 53081

Assembly Bill 177 – An Act relating to transferring technical college district assets, liabilities, and employees to the technical college system board

Good morning members of the Committee on Colleges and Universities. My name is Michael Lanser and I am the President of Lakeshore Technical College (LTC) in Cleveland, WI. I am here to express my concern over Assembly Bill 177. This year LTC celebrated 100 years of service to Manitowoc and Sheboygan counties. Over those 100 years our programs and services have changed to meet the needs of our local industry. Responsiveness is at the heart of LTC and the entire technical college system. AB177 would inhibit technical college's ability to respond to current and emerging needs. This view is also shared by local employers in our area. I have submitted letters from Steve Mirecki, President of Color Craft Graphic Arts in Manitowoc, and Jay Torke, President & CEO of Torke Coffee Roasting Company in Sheboygan, who both expressed how important LTC is to their business and how eliminating local control would have a negative effect on responsiveness and accountability.

LTC, like the other technical colleges, is focused on meeting employer needs for skilled workers. We are doing our part to help meet Governor Walker's goal of creating 250,000 jobs. Although we do not create jobs, we do help people gain the skills and knowledge they need to fill private sector jobs. Right now in Sheboygan and Manitowoc County we do not have the capacity to prepare enough workers to meet existing openings in the manufacturing sector. To increase our capacity to meet current and future needs we are expanding the Center for Manufacturing Excellence. One third of the project, which was prioritized and approved by our local board, will be supported by private funding. Donations from companies like Plastics Engineering, Miller St Nazianz, Sargento Foods, Bemis, Curt Joa, and others totaling \$2 million demonstrate the local commitment to the work of the college. This project was approved in March, ground was broken in June, and we will begin training students in January.

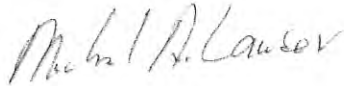
Under AB 177 this project may not occur. The Center for Manufacturing Excellence expansion would become one of many state-wide projects vying for funding. Decisions on what is best for local employers would now be made at a state level. Additional layers of bureaucracy would add complexity, cost, and time to critical projects. The state of Wisconsin is known for its quality workforce due in no small part to the fact that we have a quality technical college system that is locally focused and locally controlled.

Michael A. Lanser, Ed.D., President

A prime example of local control is the involvement of John Lukas. John and his brothers own LDI, a manufacturing company in Manitowoc. This family business relies on the workforce that we train. John also serves on the LTC Board and several program advisory committees. As a local employer and taxpayer John ensures college resources are allocated to meet priority needs of the local community and employers.

I want to introduce you to John Lukas who will share his perspective on how AB177 would have a negative effect on local control and the ability of technical colleges to respond to local needs. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share with you the unintended consequences and negative impact AB 177 would have on technical college's ability to respond to local local business.

Sincerely,



Dr. Michael A. Lanser, President  
Lakeshore Technical College

Michael A. Lanser, Ed.D., President



To: Whom This May Concern  
From: Mark Sommer  
Subject: AB 177  
Date: October 9, 2013

I wish to take this opportunity to share my thoughts with you as to AB 177. I am basing my comments as a "customer" of Gateway Technical College as well as a past board member of both the College and Racine County Workforce Development as well.

As a "customer", I used the services of Gateway to enhance the skills and abilities of our employees on numerous occasions with a high level of success.

Being that your time is very limited, I will talk about only one of the many successes, the CNC Bootcamp Program. I had the pleasure of being involved with the concept from its beginning in 2005. It was near and dear to my heart as the President and CEO of a Swiss precision machining company who was struggling to find skilled or at least potentially skilled employees to serve the demands of our customers.

This project was a complex dream on so many levels. Having said that, it became a reality as the result of a partnership formed between many of the local employers, Gateway Technical College, and the Racine, Kenosha, and Walworth Workforce Development Boards. The program serves primarily dislocated and underemployed individuals from the three counties. It has been operating since 2005 and has graduated hundreds of students, many with astounding success stories.

This is just one example of Gateway's quick responsiveness to spur economic growth and development by participating in public/private partnerships. I'm sure you are familiar with other of their ventures such as Snap On Tool and SC Johnson.

Gateway is a critical part of our commercial activity in the area in which they serve. Dr. Albrecht and his associates are literally everywhere participating in every group and every activity that even remotely touches economic growth and development. "They" are part of "us". We know them and they know us and together, we achieve success.

I do not believe that these relationships and partnerships can be generated from afar. I'm sure there are many positives that could result from centralization, but technical colleges are an integral part of the communities they serve. As a taxpayer, I want to invest in growth and development in my part of the world.

The current system has demonstrated the ability to provide rapid and efficient response to the continually changing requirements with respect to workforce training and development. I thank you for your time and hope that you will recognize the present system as a very valuable and highly successful asset of the State of Wisconsin.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark O. Sommer, President



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GRAPHIC ARTS

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Dr. Lanser:

I've been hearing quite a bit about the proposed bill that would shift LTC's funding from property taxes to a sales tax. I have some thoughts to share.

As we've talked about many times, survival in the commercial printing industry depends on the ability to adapt nimbly to change. Traditional offset printers that once produced hundreds of thousands of printed sheets of paper have become increasingly idled by the internet and other digital communications. Those who couldn't respond quickly to the demands of variable data printing, digital on-demand printing and high speed packaging printing didn't survive or were bought out.

Being responsive to our customers requires a workforce with different and more advanced skills than ever before. Instead of press people who burn plates or work with four color process film, I need to hire people with a wider variety of skills such as computer aided design or even programming skills. Many of my employees now need American Institute of Baking certification to be involved in our high speed packaging.

Lakeshore Technical College has always been there to anticipate and respond to the needs of local employers like myself. You do an excellent job of producing a local workforce that I can hire to meet rapidly shifting demands of customers. Frankly, my business depends on your ability to continue to do that.

I've learned that the proposed bill would eliminate local boards and replace them with an elected statewide board. This makes no sense to me. Local boards are comprised of area employers and employees and community figures. They know what employers like me need and are not only responsive but also accountable. Why would we want to change that?

I also understand this is a bill to reduce property taxes. At what consequence to my business and other local businesses? Property tax reform can be done without affecting the vital work you do.

My relationship with Lakeshore Technical College has been long and fruitful. It works for us both and there is no reason to change that. Please do what you can to make my voice heard in Madison.

Sincerely,

Steve Mirecki

President, Color Craft Graphic Arts



October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013

Michael A. Lanser, Ed. D.  
President - Lakeshore Technical College  
1290 North Ave.  
Cleveland, WI 53015

Dear Dr. Lanser:

Having enjoyed an excellent relationship with Lakeshore Technical College, I am concerned by the proposed bill that shifts LTC's funding from property taxes to a sales tax, thereby eliminating local board control. As both a business owner and member of the LTC Foundation Board, I believe this is a poor idea on two accounts.

First, as a business owner, I have relied on LTC to provide vital services such as HAACP training to my employees. In addition, to meet the needs of our customers, I rely upon LTC to continue supplying expert training and skilled labor in the speedy manner as they have done so proficiently in the past. Uncertain funding sources jeopardize that ability.

Second, as an LTC Foundation Board member, I know that the tremendous response of the local private sector allowed us to quickly raise money to expand our Flexible Training Arena. In addition, the remodeling of our Trade & Industry building would not have been possible under the terms of this proposed bill. Instead of moving quickly to address the skills gap of our local manufacturers by adding capacity to graduate 50 extra workers with the skills we need, this proposed bill would have required a statewide board to review, prioritize, and then send the project to referendum. The millions of dollars privately raised thus far would not have occurred and the referendum, even if eventually passed, would result in significant delays. We would still be talking about how to combat the skills gap three years from now rather than pouring millions back into our local economy by starting now. This would have a disastrous effect on our local manufacturers and would result in huge missed opportunities. Disbanding our local boards, which have always been responsive and accountable, seems very short-sighted.

LTC is important to me and my business. As a business owner, I am certainly in favor of property tax reform. But to do so at the expense of the current technical college structure will do more harm than good, not only for me, but for many others in this area that rely on LTC to meet training and employment demands. Proposing uncertain future funding and creating a new bureaucracy that isn't in touch with local businesses is not the right way to proceed. We need to do what we can to stop AB 177.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay E. Torke". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Jay E. Torke  
President & CEO, Torke Coffee Roasting Co.

## **Joint Finance Committee- Baldwin Wi., April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

Welcome to Western Wisconsin and thank you for listening to me today.

My name is Terry Nichols; I live in the Township of Colfax in Dunn County. I'm an advocate of lifelong learning, I'm a tech college graduate, and I have a baccalaureate degree in Career, Technical Education, and Training, and a Master's Degree in Career and Technical Education with an emphasis in Administration. I'm currently in my 31<sup>st</sup> year as a UW System employee working in the Telecommunications and Networking dept. at a local university. I'm here today as a local property taxpayer to speak to the proposed budget of the "sacred cow" of public higher education. I'm referring to the funding of the Wisconsin Technical College System. Thanks to Wisconsin Eye, I watched the JFC hearing with the President of the Wisconsin Technical College System President; Myrna Foy. I found it totally outrageous that WTCS would even be bold enough to request that the capital borrowing limit be raised from 1.5 million to 3.0 million knowing full well that the local property taxpayers across the state would get the bill. Myrna Foy was clearly uncomfortable when asked about mission creep and the role of General Education credits offered by the WTCS and transfer capability. The WTCS funding statutes created before the Vietnam War was over were based on a three-legged funding stool, one leg was Federal, the next leg was state, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> leg was local property taxpayers. This funding stool doesn't exist now and hasn't for decades. For a decade, I have written "letters to the editor" to local newspapers in the Chippewa Valley region about the unfairness of the funding of the Technical College System. At the local level it is clearly taxation without representation as these local tech college boards are appointed, not elected.

Nicolet College gets my award for the leader in mission creep. The WTCS policy manual is updated yearly and lists Nicolet College as Nicolet Area Technical College. If you go to the Nicolet College website; it's Nicolet College. It was stated in the creation of the Tech College statutes that Nicolet could offer a two year general education program as there were no 2yr or 4yr. universities in the area. What I'm talking about is Nicolet's Mission Statement which reads as follows;



**Mission: "In service to the people of Northern Wisconsin, we deliver superior community college education that transforms lives, enriches communities, fosters economic development, and expands employment opportunities."**

Are our Technical Colleges now Community Colleges? The Nicolet College name is so embedded that Nicolet's email addresses are- John Doe @nicoletcollege.edu

Chippewa Valley Technical College and Western Technical College also have two year General Education Programs yet the statutes haven't been updated to reflect the changes. I contacted the research area at both Tech colleges to find out about the 10 top programs at each college as it relates to total FTE students in their programs.

## Information Requested-CVTC

Inbox\

Dickens, Good Afternoon Terry, Margo Keys forwarded your request for Margaret information conce... 12/27/12

Good Afternoon Terry, Margo Keys forwarded your request for information conce...

Dickens, Margaret <mdickens@cvtc.edu> 12/27/12

to me

Good Afternoon Terry,

Margo Keys forwarded your request for information concerning the College programs by FTE. I found I couldn't just stop at the top five programs. Following are the top 20 programs by student FTE. Please let me know if you have any questions about the data provided.

1. Nursing- Associate Degree (597)
2. Undeclared (411)
3. Liberal Arts-Associate of Science (393)
4. Business Management (317)

5. Criminal Justice-Law Enforcement (228)
6. Accounting (168)
7. Information Technology-Programmer/Analyst (140)
8. Information Technology-Network Specialist (139)
9. Administrative Professional (126)
10. Marketing Management (123)
11. Human Resources (92)
12. Alcohol & Other Drug Abuse Associate (79)
13. Medial Assistant (74)
14. Radiography (73)
15. Machine Tooling (69 )
16. HVAC (both 1 and 2 year programs added together) (67)
17. Early Childhood Education (67)
18. Diagnostic Medical Sonography (64)
19. Health Information Technology (63)
20. Electromechanical Technology (59)

Best Regards,

Dr. Margaret Dickens

Director Institutional Research, Planning, & Grants

Chippewa Valley Technical College

**Western Technical College-LaCrosse**

### **Western Technical College**

#### **Degree FTEs by Program**

**Program**

**2010-2011 AY    2011-2012 AY    2012-2013 AY**

<b>Assc of Science, Liberal Arts</b>	303.6	448.2	498.2
<b>Nursing - Associate Degree</b>	353.1	295.0	283.4
<b>Business Management</b>	236.2	229.4	236.6
<b>Accounting</b>	153.8	148.3	133.7
<b>Criminal Justice - Law Enforce</b>	142.6	151.0	119.5
<b>Supervisory Management</b>	124.7	113.8	107.7
<b>Undeclared</b>	140.2	112.3	99.0
<b>Graphic Design</b>	109.3	88.3	96.3
<b>Radiography</b>	99.3	91.8	82.5
<b>IT - Network Systems Admin</b>	71.2	65.4	70.2
<b>Physical Therapist Assistant</b>	72.1	67.3	62.1
<b>Automotive Technician</b>	54.3	51.9	59.9
<b>Marketing</b>	66.0	63.7	53.7
<b>Medical Assistant</b>	59.7	62.2	52.8
<b>Paralegal</b>	54.8	53.3	50.4
<b>Elec &amp; Computer Eng Technology</b>	54.6	44.7	49.2
<b>Occupational Therapy Assistant</b>	53.1	48.6	48.8
<b>Human Services Associate</b>			48.5
<b>Diesel &amp; Heavy Eqt Tech</b>	52.3	49.1	48.4
<b>Human Resource Management</b>	53.2	58.2	46.3
<b>Bio-Medical Electronics</b>	44.1	43.7	43.9
<b>Early Childhood Education</b>	62.5	48.0	42.6
<b>Culinary Management</b>	52.3	41.2	42.1
<b>IT - Web &amp; Software Developer</b>	52.6	52.0	39.0
<b>Medical Admin Professional</b>		2.3	38.2
<b>Nursing Assistant</b>	45.1	44.0	36.7
<b>Respiratory Therapist</b>	46.3	45.1	35.8
<b>Administrative Professional</b>	45.0	36.4	35.3
<b>Air Cond, Heat, &amp; Refrig Tech</b>	42.5	45.8	34.4
<b>Fire Protection Technician</b>	46.5	40.1	34.0
<b>Agri-Business Science Tech</b>	27.3	37.4	33.9
<b>IT - Computer Support Spec</b>	44.6	44.8	32.6
<b>Visual Communications</b>	46.7	39.6	31.4
<b>Medical Laboratory Technician</b>	38.3	31.9	28.8
<b>Electromechanical Technology</b>	36.6	30.9	27.7
<b>Health Information Technology</b>	18.5	26.6	27.4
<b>Architectural Technology</b>	38.4	31.8	26.7
<b>Welding</b>	28.0	26.3	26.6
<b>Dental Assistant</b>	24.6	28.5	25.0
<b>Refrig, A/C, &amp; Heat Serv Tech</b>	27.6	27.2	24.7
<b>Landscape Horticulture</b>	31.3	23.3	23.6
<b>Wood Tech</b>	32.6	26.8	22.2
<b>Finance</b>	29.4	30.9	21.2
<b>Electr Systems Install &amp; Maint</b>	22.4	18.2	20.8

Paramedic Technician	13.4	10.6	17.7
Machine Tool Operation	12.5	6.3	17.6
Surgical Technology			17.3
Instructional Asst - AD	36.3	12.4	17.1
Mechanical Design Technology	20.3	12.1	15.6
Practical Nursing	37.5	24.3	14.8
Surgical Technologist	31.7	31.6	12.9
Crim Justice - Law Enf Academy	6.6	6.0	12.8
Food Production Specialist	8.6	6.6	12.2
Office Support Specialist	13.5	13.7	12.0
Therapeutic Massage	12.4	13.2	10.3
Accounting Assistant	6.4	7.3	9.7
ITC Horticulture Plant Care	13.1	15.9	9.5
Farm, Bus, & Production Mgmt	24.2	15.9	9.5
EMT - Paramedic	18.9	17.5	9.0
Emergency Medical Technician	9.7	6.3	8.9
IT - Computer Support Tech	6.0	10.3	7.9
ITC Computer Literacy Cert		6.7	7.8
Building Systems Technology			6.8
Medical Coding Specialist	9.6	7.6	6.2
ITC Leadership in Mftrg			4.9
ITC Leadership Essentials	0.2	4.5	4.5
ITC Supervision Essentials	0.1	1.0	3.6
ITC Commercial Baking	14.9	6.4	3.6
ITC Computer App Specialist	13.2	11.6	3.6
Central Service Technician	5.2	5.8	3.4
Pharmacy Technician	2.8	1.6	2.7
Electrician (Construction)	4.9	1.8	2.7
Tech Plumbing	3.4	3.9	2.5
Electrician Apprentice	2.3	2.5	2.2
Interior Design	28.4	14.7	2.0
ITC Phlebotomy Certificate	1.4	1.5	1.9
ITC Quantity Food Production		2.6	1.8
IT Network Systems Technician			1.7
Metal Fabricator	0.7	0.6	1.6
Individualized Tech Studies	2.0	2.5	1.5
ITC YoungStar		1.4	1.5
Maintenance Mech/Millwright	1.2	1.3	1.3
Instructional Assistant	0.2		1.3
Disability Support Specialist	29.8	12.3	1.3
Indrl Electrician Apprentice	0.4	0.7	1.1
Tech Studies - Journeyworker	0.7	0.8	1.1
Steamfitting	1.6	1.4	1.1
ITC Web Design Certificate	1.9	1.7	0.8

Sheet Metal Construction	0.7	0.6	0.8
ITC Animal Science	1.5	1.7	0.7
ITC Health Office Assistant			0.7
Welding Skills Institute Cert	4.6	0.9	0.7
CNC Operator Certificate	6.2	0.1	0.5
Maintenance Techn Apprentice		0.1	0.5
ITC Microsoft Office Basic	1.5	0.8	0.4
CNC Setup Certificate	1.8	0.0	0.3
Tool and Die	0.3	0.5	0.3
ITC Database Basics and Beyond	0.1	0.2	0.2
ITC Human Factors Lead. Mftrg	6.4	13.0	0.1
ITC Operations Leadership Mftg	11.6	4.0	0.1
Technical Communications	8.2	1.0	0.1
ITC Computerized Accounting		0.1	0.1
ITC Early Childhood Adm Cred			0.1
Voice Data Video Installer			0.1
ITC Electricity Fundamentals	0.5	0.7	0.0
Dental Hygienist	46.7	9.9	
Advanced EMT	0.2	2.8	
CNC Programmer Certificate	0.2	1.1	
ITC Computer Hardware Cert	0.4	0.9	
ITC Team Leadership in Mftrg	7.1	0.8	
ITC Ind Electronics Maint	2.9	0.7	
ITC Marketing Certificate		0.4	
ITC Desktop Publishing	0.3	0.2	
Electroneurodiagnostic Tech	0.2	0.1	
ITC Fluid Power Fundamentals		0.1	
ITC Power Sys, Motor & Control		0.1	
ITC Crop Science	0.4		
IT - Programmer/Analyst	0.4		
Electronic Servicing Tech	0.4		
Computer Engineering Tech	0.2		
ITC Mechanical Design Tech CAD	0.2		
Carpentry (Construction)	0.1		
ITC Programmable Logic Control	0.1		
Machinery Mechanic	0.1		
Elec Systems Install & Maint	0.0		
ITC Human Resources	0.0		
	<b>3,637.0</b>	<b>3,410.7</b>	<b>3,297.0</b>

Several years ago while attending a CVTC District Board meeting, I asked President Barker why the 2 yr. general education program when there are three 4 year universities within the CVTC District. His answer was; "We're cheaper."

In the 2012 November General Election, Western Technical College had a 79.8 million dollar referendum pass. When marketing the referendum question, Western officials neglected to tell the public that they also had 12.6 million of capital borrowing as well. Total billed to the local property taxpayers- 92.4 million dollars. While all qualified voters in the district get to vote on the referendum, it's the property taxpayers that get the bill. This is totally unfair and a just reason to move funding of all public higher education to the state level, all members of a community should pay for the educational service available. No more sacred cow.

To illustrate my point even further, I contacted the Township clerk of the Township of Colfax in Dunn County and the township clerk of the Township of Howard in Chippewa County .These townships are adjacent to each other. I asked the clerks what the populations of their townships were and what they paid to Chippewa Valley Tech College for taxes in the last four years. The township of Howard has a population of 795. The total tech college tax paid for four years was \$422,369.44. The Township of Colfax has a population of 1,212. The total taxes paid for four years were \$503,342.83. The combined total of the two townships is \$925,712.27. In 2013, by not addressing this antiquated funding system created before the Vietnam War ended and the "dark age" of technology before the Internet, the local property taxpayer is a funding slave to a system that is clearly taxation without representation at the local level. Let's not forget the "Double Whammy" as I call it. Local property taxpayers pay a consider chunk of money to the local school districts as well. What about the rest of the residents in these local communities?

The pursuit of public higher education is clearly an individual choice. The State of Wisconsin has an aging population and an aging workforce. It's time that the Governor and the legislature takes a leadership and stewardship role when funding all public higher education. This is a fairness issue, not a partisan issue.

In the greatest recession since the Great Depression, the unanswered question I keep asking is; "Why are seniors, living on fixed incomes and trying to

stay in their homes, paying for a higher education system that is completely individual choice to attend?"

Thank you.

Terry Nichols

nicholst47@gmail.com

715-962-3781

Hackbarth, Wade <HackbarthW@westernnc.edu> Sep 23

to me

Dear Mr. Nichols,

My apologies on not getting back to you sooner. The \$1.5 million isn't actually an annual limit. Wisconsin Technical College Systems are restricted to \$1.5 million per bond sale for construction related capital expenses. There is a requirement to have 30 days between bond sales, however, so Districts could borrow up to \$18 million per year for construction related expenses (i.e. 12 bond sales).

I hope that helps. If you need any additional clarification or have any further questions, please don't hesitate to let me know. Thanks again.

Wade

**From:** Terry Nichols [mailto:[nicholst47@gmail.com](mailto:nicholst47@gmail.com)]

**Sent:** Monday, September 16, 2013 6:21 AM





WISCONSIN  
TECHNICAL COLLEGE  
SYSTEM

September 17, 2012

Mr. Terry Nichols  
Town of Colfax  
Dunn County, Wisconsin

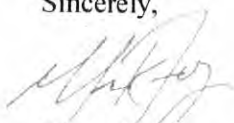
Dear Mr. Nichols:

The following information is provided in response to your request for information on technical colleges' proposed General Obligation borrowing activity for 2012-13. As you are aware, the WTCS System Office does not collect this information specifically, but we have compiled it through a manual review of the 16 technical college districts' 2012-13 budget documents. According to these documents, the technical colleges' budgeted General Obligation borrowing for 2012-13 is:

Technical College District	2012-13 Budgeted General Obligation Debt
Blackhawk	\$ 4,100,000
Chippewa Valley	7,900,000
Fox Valley	78,050,000
Gateway	12,000,000
Lakeshore	3,000,000
Madison	44,070,000
Milwaukee	40,000,000
Moraine Park	5,900,000
Mid-State	5,100,000
Nicolet	1,400,000
Northcentral	8,713,000
Northeast Wisconsin	13,950,000
Southwest	2,500,000
Waukesha County	7,750,000
Western	12,600,000
Wisconsin Indianhead	7,000,000
Total	\$254,033,000

I hope you find this information useful. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Morna K. Foy  
Vice President / Executive Assistant  
[morna.foy@wtcsystem.edu](mailto:morna.foy@wtcsystem.edu)



4622 University Avenue · PO Box 7874 · Madison, WI 53707-7874 · 608.266.1207  
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e-mail: [info@wtcsystem.edu](mailto:info@wtcsystem.edu) · [www.wtcsystem.edu](http://www.wtcsystem.edu) · [www.witechcolleges.org](http://www.witechcolleges.org)

Proposed 2013-14 General Obligation Debt

BTC	12,800,000
CVTC	9,980,000
FVTC	17,275,000
GTC	11,000,000
LTC	5,000,000
MadATC	31,070,000
MiSTC	4,300,000
MilATC	36,000,000
MPTC	6,175,000
NATC	1,400,000
NTC	10,000,000
NWTC	19,100,000
SWTC	2,500,000
WCTC	7,750,000
WTC	13,100,000
WITC	9,925,000
	<u>197,375,000</u>

Source: 2013-14 District Budget Documents  
Statement of Resources, Uses and Changes in Fund Balance

Proposed 2012-13 General Obligation Debt

BTC	4,100,000
CVTC	7,900,000
FVTC	78,050,000
GTC	12,000,000
LTC	3,000,000
MadATC	44,070,000
MiSTC	5,100,000
MilATC	40,000,000
MPTC	5,900,000
NATC	1,400,000
NTC	8,713,000
NWTC	13,950,000
SWTC	2,500,000
WCTC	7,750,000
WTC	12,600,000
WITC	7,000,000
	<u>254,033,000</u>

Source: 2012-13 District Budget Documents  
Statement of Resources, Uses and Changes in Fund Balance

Proposed 2011-12 General Obligation Debt

BTC	3,300,000
CVTC	2,490,000
FVTC	9,400,000
GTC	10,000,000
LTC	4,500,000
MadATC	94,270,000
MilATC	35,000,000
MPTC	4,735,000
MSTC	5,100,000
NATC	2,900,000
NTC	8,200,000
NWTC	9,100,000
SWTC	2,500,000
WCTC	5,330,000
WITC	6,900,000
WTC	10,040,000
	<u>213,765,000</u>

Source: 2011-12 District Budget Documents

Proposed 2010-11 General Obligation Debt

BTC	1,750,000
CVTC	2,300,000
FVTC	8,750,000
GTC	9,000,000
LTC	4,000,000
MadATC	9,480,000
MilATC	31,000,000
MPTC	3,750,000
MSTC	5,000,000
NATC	1,400,000
NTC	8,000,000
NWTC	10,770,000
SWTC	2,000,000
WCTC	7,360,000
WITC	5,800,000
WTC	6,500,000
	<u>116,860,000</u>

Source: 2010-11 District Budget Documents

Proposed 2009-10 General Obligation Debt

BTC	2,500,000
CVTC	3,250,000
FVTC	8,200,000
GTC	8,000,000
LTC	5,000,000
MadATC	14,000,000
MilATC	28,000,000
MPTC	4,930,000
MSTC	3,000,000
NATC	1,400,000
NTC	7,300,000
NWTC	7,900,000
SWTC	25,900,000
WCTC	6,235,000
WITC	5,800,000
WTC	4,000,000
	<u>135,415,000</u>

Source: 2009-10 District Budget Documents

# J&D TUBE BENDERS. INC.

8951 Enterprise Way, Weston WI 54476, Fax: 715-359-8687,  
Phone: 715-359-2073, [TFELCH@JDTUBE.COM](mailto:TFELCH@JDTUBE.COM)

Tom Felch  
President /Owner J&D Tube Benders, Inc.  
Schofield, Wisconsin

- 1974 graduate of NTCI in Wausau with an Associate Degree in Mechanical Design
- Currently a member of the newly formed Central Wisconsin Metal Manufacturing Alliance
- J&D Tube currently employs 129 employees
  - 117 production
  - 8 office
  - 4 upper management

J & D Tube Benders is a tube bending and fabricating facility specializing in formed components for the off road construction industry. J&D was founded in 1968 by my father Dane Felch and his partner. I have been associated with the company since the very beginning, except for a short period time when I worked outside the company for J.I. Case in Wausau in their engineering department. I returned to the company in 1978 and my wife and I purchased the company from the partnership in 1990. When we bought the company we had 15 employees working in a 10,000 square foot facility with gross revenue of \$800,000. In 2000, we moved into the Weston Technology Park as their first tenant. At that time, our new facility was 90,000 square feet and we had approximately 40 employees. In 2005, we put a 24,000 square foot production addition on to our building. As stated earlier, we currently have 129 employees and a 114,000 square foot facility. Our gross sales for 2013 are projected to be approximately \$18,000,000.

Over the past few years we have established a close relationship with NTC and have taken advantage of the training services they can provide.

- Thirteen of our employees are graduates of NTC
- 70 employees have gone through lean training through NTC and NWMOC

- 40 employees have gone through an in house print class through NTC
- 8 lead people have gone through leadership training through NTC

We also have three employees who started with us as part of an internship program through our area high school. One of those individuals has graduated from NTC and is working for us full time. The other two will be starting the Manufacturing Technician program at NTC in January 2014.

Our company is a supporter of NTC'S Advanced Manufacturing Center of Excellence, a new facility built to meet the training needs of local businesses.

J&D Tube Benders also offers two scholarships to NTC, as well as a scholarship in my father's memory, the Dane Felch Memorial scholarship.

We are currently 8 years into a third generation transition and all is proceeding well. The only concern I have for the success of the third generation is the availability of a work force to support our future growth.

As a member of the steering committee of the Central Wisconsin Metal Manufacturing Alliance we are looking for solutions to the shortage of workers and how we can get them trained to meet our needs. Northcentral Technical College will be a key element in providing the necessary training required in many areas. NTC has also become very active in working to bridge the gap between manufacturers and the K-12 system. This is an area of concern as to how we will influence high school graduates to pursue a future in manufacturing.

It is of the utmost importance that the control over the technical colleges remains local where they can provide services as needed locally rather than as a statewide plan. NTC has been very responsive to our needs and has provided services throughout the district as needed where needed. They understand the unique needs of the municipalities and local industries in their district and they are working to meet those needs.

In my world things happen fast. Business issues come up that need immediate attention. I am very concerned that if the technical colleges lose local governance, they will not be able to have the same responsiveness to our needs or help will take too long. I am also concerned that if the monies for the technical colleges are controlled by the state many smaller communities would suffer, as the dollars would be spent in the higher populated regions of our state. We have a system that works. Local colleges serving the local needs of the region they are in. Yes, this is some burden on the taxes we pay. However, I do not see where we still wouldn't be paying for the colleges but would lose all control over where our monies were being spent.

I cannot support this bill and would recommend that we keep the current system as is.





**Testimony in Opposition to AB 177**

Ending Local Control, Funding and Responsiveness of Wisconsin Technical Colleges

Assembly Colleges and Universities Committee  
Representative Stephen Nass, Chair  
October 10, 2013

Dear Representative Nass and Members of the Committee,

Wisconsin technical colleges deliver unmatched outcomes, even in the heart of a great recession:

- 88% of graduates are employed in great jobs within 6 months of graduation.
- Median compensation within 6 months of graduating is \$37,000 for 2-year grads.
- Surveys of more than 2,500 employers find more than 93% satisfied or very satisfied with technical college education of technical college grads they hire.

No statewide college or university system in America has publicly demonstrated this level of performance or return on student and taxpayer investment. Even more, the returns on investment for all Wisconsinites are experienced day in and out. If you had your teeth cleaned, medical lab tests conducted, 911 called for police, fire or EMTs, power restored after a storm, computer network or cell service improved, nursing care provided to a loved one, or used great Wisconsin products, from lawn mowers to bratwurst, you are interacting with Wisconsin technical college graduates every day.

This bill is fundamentally flawed in a number of ways and threatens the positive outcomes for which the nation's premier technical college system is known.

**Property Taxes**

First, it is important to note that Wisconsin technical colleges are not opposed to property tax reform. We welcome ways for the state to make technical colleges and all forms of local government less dependent on property tax levies. You have the power to study, identify and implement property tax reform without ending technical college

responsiveness. There is nothing magic about technical college levies compared with focusing on any other local government or service. You could just as easily decide to make all road maintenance and repair or all fire or police services a state function and take them off property tax levies. We do not support that or suggest that you do. In reality, however, shifting technical colleges from local to state control is no different. These are services that are, by definition, local.

In fact, the nation's true innovation in higher education is not the bachelor's degree or advanced degrees, both of which preceded the founding of America by centuries. The nation's true higher ed innovation is community and technical colleges. No other nation had them until they were invented here. Other than a handful of Illinois schools, ours were the first, founded in 1911. This model, now greater than 2,000 colleges strong nationwide, is truly American and is truly local.

The founding concept of technical and community colleges, and their driving concept a century later, is local control. Local control is local responsiveness. Local responsiveness can't be moved to the state bureaucracy without losing key benefits and responsiveness to business and industry, to entrepreneurs, and to the 350,000 (1-in-9 of all working age) adults statewide who enroll with us every year.

One method among several that could be used to reform property taxes is a state income tax credit for a portion of property taxes paid. This would preserve local services, responsiveness and local control, while reducing property tax burdens on all Wisconsinites. This has the benefit of allowing the state to invest as much as it can afford over time, whether through improved state revenue, other strategic reallocation of state revenue, or, if necessary, by increasing revenue through a mechanism such as the sales tax.

### **Local College Responsiveness**

Ending technical colleges as local entities -- entities that build and run the facilities and decide on programs and services locally for local employers and citizens -- is the wrong path to property tax reform. There is simply no way that a state agency in Madison will respond as effectively or rapidly as our local colleges do to a local employer in Eau Claire or Oshkosh or Prairie du Chien or Marinette.

If there were a quintessential way to demonstrate what "throwing the baby out with the bathwater" means, AB 177 could be a leading candidate. To support this bill, you must study and conclude in good faith that Wisconsin business and industry, police and fire, health care, and the full range of more than 300 careers can be served as well or better by state employees than by local employees, and served better by state control rather than community decision making (that already includes state-level accountability and coordination). If you believe service and responsiveness will be eroded, you are accepting this as a cost of property tax reform when there are more viable property tax reform initiatives possible that would in no way affect technical college funding or services.

You would need to accept that a state agency can respond effectively in place of local boards, local private-sector advisory committees, and locally engaged and employed faculty and staff. We have 6,000 Wisconsinites serving on local private-sector program advisory committees statewide. Each program at each college has such a committee. Would these individuals continue to provide guidance locally on what they need and expect from the colleges if the decisions were all to be made in Madison instead of in their local community?

Many of these questions have already been studied in great detail.

### **Prior Research and Recommendations**

In 2003, Representative Bies and several of his constituents requested Assembly leadership address these policy issues on behalf of the “Municipal Taxpayers Commission” (MTC), a publicly-funded group comprised of several Door County towns and villages. The MTC hired lobbyists and registered with the (then) Wisconsin Ethics Board as seeking to “Change the funding mechanism for Wisconsin Technical College System.” MTC meeting minutes and newspaper coverage described the MTC’s overall purposes as: eliminating technical college property tax authority, freezing technical college tax revenues, and requiring that technical college boards be elected.

In response, then-Assembly Speaker John Gard appointed an “Assembly Speaker's Taskforce” to study these questions. The leader of the MTC, a local town chair who was also the Door County Board Chair, was appointed to the Taskforce. After more than a year of detailed study, that blue-ribbon panel of legislators and citizens made a series of recommendations. Those recommendations did not include changing the local nature of technical colleges or the system’s mission or governance. In fact, the Taskforce consensus was to maintain appointed local technical college boards and the colleges' basic funding model.

The Taskforce did recommend a goal of better balance in funding technical colleges. Specifically, the Taskforce recommended that the top three funding sources - property taxes, state support and student tuition - each provide closer to 1/3 of operating revenue.

### **Funding Trends Since the 2003 Taskforce**

Since that time, tuition has increased as a share of funding and eclipsed state support to become the colleges’ second largest funding source. Property tax levies are stable and have been frozen since 2010. State support has eroded significantly, although a major factor in this reduction were the large cuts in tandem with Act 10-related cost reductions.

Technical colleges have consistently sought new state investment hand-in-hand with accountability for the outcomes delivered by that investment. The 2013-15 budget bill creates a new performance-based distribution model for state aid and provides a modest increase in state funding (\$5 million annually) beginning in July, 2014. However, since the 2003 Taskforce recommendation that state investment be increased to help balance property tax revenue, total state support has fallen 34% in actual dollar terms (not adjusted for increased enrollment or for inflation).

Technical colleges were not opposed in 2003, and are not opposed now, to discussing new funding ideas. We have long supported better state investment. Few or no governing district board members would oppose honest and stable ways to be less reliant on property taxes. We remain concerned about tuition burdens and remain vigilant about property tax levies. We welcome the discussion about ways to reduce property tax burdens for all Wisconsinites but don't believe that AB 177 is a viable way to start that conversation.

Viable policy ideas must protect the colleges' responsiveness. We believe the data proves that it is not possible to disengage governance, local control and funding, from responsiveness and outcomes. The 100-year history of community and technical colleges being primarily "community" and locally controlled distinguishes them from universities in more than simply degrees offered.

### **Additional Questions and Concerns**

Besides ending the local nature of your technical colleges, this bill raises a number of other major public policy issues of concern:

AB 177 seeks to increase the state sales tax by 20%. It eliminates some \$800 million annually in technical college local property tax revenue. However, the bill creates absolutely no linkage between new state revenue and the loss of the colleges' main funding source. There is no assurance that any state tax revenue would be dedicated to lost local revenue, and no mechanism proposed to replace the lost funding.

AB 177 creates a precedent of making major state policy choices by California-style ballot initiative. This has consequences far beyond the current bill itself. It will create a new culture of campaigns for and against proposition votes, and perhaps for and against the ballot proposition model itself. Frankly, we believe that any legislative vote on AB 177 or matters like it should be a vote by legislators to pass it or defeat it outright. Sending a question to public referendum is not how the state passed voter ID, concealed carry or school choice. Why is this enormous shift in the state's culture of policy making being proposed in this case? What would doing so mean for the future?

AB 177 requires the shift to the state of assets and debt, including hundreds of millions of dollars in authorized debt obligations. What is the legal mechanism for changing the ownership of bonds and notes issued by 16 regional local governments and held in good faith by investors across the globe? Is this even possible legally? Does it have consequences for the state's financial well-being and bond ratings? How will local businesses and industry providing donations to leverage new facilities and programming feel about such a shift? We have already heard of businesses that are reluctant to invest in a local project because of fears of a state takeover.

AB 177 shifts control of thousands of contracts for services and goods to the state. What assessment is necessary to determine if doing so is lawful, and what negative consequences, including litigation, does informing thousands of vendors that the parties to their contracts will no longer exist as local governments create?

We have created highly successful self-funded health benefits plans. We have an enormously successful wholly-owned municipal mutual insurance company, DMI. We have trust funds set aside for future post-employment benefits obligations.

The list goes on and on. Fundamentally, this is much more than a funding bill. It is a bill that seeks to make major changes affecting every community in the state and the state itself. It is being pursued without answers to the above questions or dozens of others.

### **Bottom Line**

The local nature of Wisconsin technical college control and funding is part of every molecule of their capacity, service and responsiveness. This bill threatens technical college capacity, funding, responsiveness and governance. This bill threatens the basis for the colleges' local connections and partnerships, and the colleges' outcomes. We believe that your constituent business communities, industries, and citizens themselves, don't support this. We ask that you consider what your policy objective is and then work with us and others to build that bill. We must say in the most plain and matter-of-fact terms today that this isn't that bill.

Paul Gabriel  
Executive Director

August 27, 2013



Listening. Learning. Leading.®

Representative Mary Czaja  
Room 15 West  
P. O. Box 8952  
Madison WI 53708

Senator Thomas Tiffany  
Room 409 South  
P. O. Box 7882  
Madison WI 53707-7882

Dear Ms. Czaja and Mr. Tiffany:

I am the CEO/President of Church Mutual Insurance Company in Merrill, Wisconsin. Our company employs approximately 700 employees who primarily reside in Lincoln and Marathon County. Church Mutual is the world's largest property/casualty insurer for religious entities of all denominations. We also insure senior living facilities and some Wisconsin public school districts. Our national headquarters has been located in Merrill since the company organized in 1897. Our 116 year success story is possible because we can hire and retain an educated workforce who have the skills to conduct our business. Without the critical training that NTC provides in communications, math and technology, we would not be successful.

My company relies upon Northcentral Technical College to help supply our skilled workforce, technical assistance and workplace training. We hire their graduates and use NTC personnel to help plan and staff customized training for our employees. Having the decision-makers for NTC located only 15 miles away, means we get prompt answers and attention to our needs. The connectivity of people/programs at NTC and Church Mutual is enhanced by being "locally controlled".

I am very concerned that AB 177 will have a deleterious effect on our working relationship with NTC. Church Mutual counts on the college and they deliver the help we need. If this bill passes, I believe NTC will not be as responsive to our business or to other businesses in North Central Wisconsin as they are now. That outcome would not be good.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael E. Ravn". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Michael E. Ravn  
President & Chief Executive Officer

ss-tiffany-mczaja8-27-13

3000 Schuster Lane, P.O. Box 357, Merrill, WI 54452-0357 715.536.5577 800.554.2642 fax: 715.539.4650 [www.churchmutual.com](http://www.churchmutual.com)

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## MINISTRY HEALTH CARE

Dear Legislator,

I am the President of Ministry Saint Clare's Hospital in Weston, WI and Ministry Good Samaritan Hospital in Merrill, WI. These two hospitals provide essential medical services to residents of Lincoln and Marathon County. Ministry Saint Clare's Hospital is also a major referral center for heart surgery and orthopedic care for patients from central and northern Wisconsin. These two hospitals, combined, employ more than 700 people and represent some of the largest employers in their communities.

Ministry Health Care, our parent company, is the largest Catholic Health System in the State of Wisconsin. Comprised of 15 hospitals, physician clinics, home care services, an insurance company, and other related medical support services, Ministry Health Care employs more than 15,000 people across the state of Wisconsin. Our organization is highly dependent on having a skilled work force trained in a broad area of medical and technical specialties.

Ministry Health Care relies upon the Wisconsin Technical College system for our skilled workforce in nursing, diagnostic and testing services, and related medical support specialties. Locally, in the Wausau and Merrill communities, we enjoy a strong working relationship with Northcentral Technical College. Our hospital leaders serve on local advisory boards to provide input on current and future workforce needs and our hospitals serve as training sites for student clinical experiences. We hire a large number of technical school graduates annually and are highly dependent on local technical colleges as a supplier of our workforce.

I am very concerned that AB 177 will have a detrimental effect on our working relationship with NTC. It is critical that we maintain the ability to have local input on programs and curriculum to prepare students to meet our ever changing workforce needs. Our hospitals count on the local technical colleges to adapt quickly to workforce needs and they deliver. For example, as our health system has moved to more technology, such as electronic health records in the hospital environment, NTC has modified student programs to ensure that essential technology skills are added to the curriculum. If this bill passes, the college will not be as responsive to our hospital or to other local businesses as they are now.

I urge you to reject AB 177 in support of keeping local technical colleges under LOCAL control.

Sincerely,  
Mary Krueger



## **PACAL INDUSTRIES, LLC**

400 CAR STREET • LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN 54603-3055 • (608) 784-1030

August 21, 2013

Members of the Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities:

I am Vice President of La Crosse Operations for Pacal and have been with the company for 19 of the last 22 years. I took a brief hiatus to work for Western Technical College from 2009 to 2011 and manage a federal grant for manufacturing training. This gives me the unique perspective of having both received services from WTC and provided services to businesses as a member of the Business and Industry Services division of WTC.

As a regional steel fabricator, we have hired a number of people over the years with welding diplomas from Western. As a member of the Welding Advisory Committee, I have helped to guide the welding department. WTC graduates have always been properly trained and valuable assets to our company. Perhaps even more valuable, though, have been the customized services we have received over the years.

We are a subcontract fabricator. As such, we often have customers with specific needs, varying welding specifications, and short time lines. Western has assisted us in developing welding specifications, training welders to weld per those specifications, and certifying that those welders were qualified in those specifications. Their ability to assess our needs and locally make the decisions to commit resources to our needs (at our cost) has been instrumental to our ability to obtain business over the years, resulting in additional employment in the La Crosse community. In some cases, if we had to wait for a central committee to review and approve the resources, the opportunity would have passed us by.

While employed at Western, I saw the internal workings that generate the responsiveness to business for which WTC is known in the region. Both within the grant I managed and in the general operations of Business and Industry Services, Western was able to deliver critical manufacturing training in a matter of weeks, and sometimes only days. Even in today's world of instant communication, no central committee could reach a clear understanding of the need and deliver a solution in such a short period. Local control is critical if Western is to respond to immediate needs of local job creators.

It is my understanding that AB 177, if enacted, would remove much of the local control of Wisconsin Technical Colleges in favor of a central committee. For the reasons above, I believe local control to be a critical component of the proper functioning of the technical college system. I therefore oppose AB 177.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey P. Kroes  
Vice President – La Crosse Operations

## **PACAL INDUSTRIES, LLC**

FAX (608) 785-2150 • WEBSITE: [www.pacal.com](http://www.pacal.com) • E-MAIL: [industries@pacal.com](mailto:industries@pacal.com)  
MAIN OFFICE: 2500 WEST COUNTY ROAD B, STE 100, ROSEVILLE, MINNESOTA 55113

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*Integrated Plate Metal Fabrication and Welding*

To The Members of the Assembly Colleges and Universities Committee

Greetings,

I am the President of D&S Manufacturing, which is a 170 employee metal fabrication business located in Black River Falls, Wisconsin. We are engaged in the production of complex weldments and other components for customers in the transportation equipment, agricultural equipment, construction equipment and defense products industries. We employ a variety of skilled trade workers including welders and machinists. We are within the district served by Western Technical College in La Crosse.

Our relationship with Western Technical College has always been one of mutual benefit. We have the opportunity to hire graduates of their programs, we have participated in customized training programs and we have been afforded the opportunity to provide feedback on their programming and help shape the curriculum.

AB 177 would virtually eliminate local control of Technical Colleges in Wisconsin and it would significantly impair their ability to respond to the unique needs of each individual district. If this bill passes, it would diminish the responsiveness of Western Technical College to employers in the district.

I also question whether or not the passage of AB 177 would actually result in any tax savings. While the bill provides for an increase in the state sales tax, it does not clearly require that these increased taxes be allocated solely for the support of the Technical College System.

In my opinion, AB 177 is not the way to reform property taxes and it is certainly not the way to support employers and jobs in Wisconsin.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Dougherty  
President and CEO

*PROSPERITY*  
SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COOPERATIVE

August 28, 2013

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State Representative Stephen Nass  
P.O. Box 9853  
Madison, WI 53708

Re: AB 177

The Honorable Stephen Nass,

I have reviewed Assembly Bill 177, and do not support the bill. The removal of local control, for starters, is a bad decision. The local control is one of the things that has made our technical colleges a success and part of our community. This removal of local control and undefined funding mechanism for the colleges is too much of a risk for such a critical resource. Southwest Tech in Fennimore and Blackhawk Tech is easily accessed and has the ability to make decisions locally and to directly and quickly react to the needs of our population and businesses. This ability must not be altered or diminished.

Southwest Tech and Blackhawk Tech are a critical resource to our economic development plan, and from what I read in AB 177, I don't see how their role in economic development will be improved by the bill. Therefore we do not support the passing of AB 177.

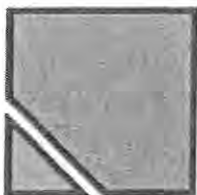
Sincerely,



Ron Brisbois

President

Prosperity Southwest Wisconsin



PROSPERITY  
SOUTHWEST  
WISCONSIN

BRIAN D. RUDE  
Vice President, External and Member Relations



August 29, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing today on behalf of Dairyland Power Cooperative, a generation and transmission cooperative based in La Crosse. Dairyland provides wholesale electric energy to 25 distribution cooperatives, including 18 in Wisconsin. The majority of our 585 employees work in Wisconsin, including our headquarters in La Crosse, and power plants in Alma, Genoa, Elk Mound and Ladysmith. In addition, our crews work on transmission facilities throughout the state.

We are writing to express our support for the current structure of the Wisconsin Technical College system, and in opposition to any moves to have the state take over the funding and operation of our technical colleges.

Dairyland regularly recruits new employees from several of Wisconsin's technical colleges. We are impressed with the training of these employees. We also enjoy a good working relationship with the local administration and faculty of our colleges.

Technical colleges are successful largely because they are local in nature, locally governed and locally funded. We believe this local control leads to more responsiveness to our business needs. Many of our employees have been actively involved in keeping programs attuned to current workforce needs. We feel we have more input in the current system than we would with a state governed and operated system.

To Dairyland, this is a case of "if it isn't broke, don't fix it." We are skeptical that a state takeover of the technical college system will lead to improvements in the outcomes which we believe so vital to keeping a well-trained, available workforce. Since the current system is effective in achieving these goals, we encourage the state to maintain the current funding methods for our local technical colleges.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our concerns regarding this issue.

Sincerely,

Brian D. Rude  
Vice President, External and Member Relations

BDR:mkw

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3200 East Ave. S. • PO Box 817 • La Crosse, WI 54602-0817 • 608-787-1320 • 608-787-1420 fax • www.dairynet.com

Dairyland Power Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

August 29, 2013

Mr. Steven Nash, Chair  
Assembly Colleges & Universities Committee  
Room 12 West, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 8953  
Madison, WI 53708

Re: Proposed Legislation Bill – AB 177

Dear Representative Nash:

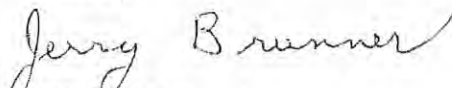
I would like to address some of the issues involved regarding AB 177, the proposed legislation on the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) now before this committee. I want to strongly express my opposition to this bill. My principal objection is that the bill would remove Wisconsin's technical colleges from the control of local boards, citizens and businesses. As a result, local responsiveness to the needs of businesses, which has been a much appreciated hallmark of the technical colleges, would erode, to the detriment of those businesses and the State.

I have been in a professional management position in Wisconsin Agribusiness for many years with the Farm Credit System, Wisconsin USDA County ASCS offices, and for the last 27 years with Hartung Brothers, Inc. a large Madison based Ag firm dealing in Seed Corn, Cucumbers & Peppers, and Processed Vegetable production here in Wisconsin and the Midwest. In May this year I retired from their Human Resources position. During this time period I had the opportunity to hire hundreds of graduates & interns from the WTCS in this State from Chippewa Valley Tech, Fox Valley Tech and over 80 graduates alone from Southwestern Wisconsin Technical College (SWTC) in Fennimore, WI – a great source of young agricultural talent. Hartung Brothers and I were highly satisfied with the knowledge, skills and aptitude these students brought to the Company.

We always found the technical colleges ready and willing to talk to us about the competences we needed in their graduates and to make adjustments to their curriculum so as to deliver what our company needed. I have been an employer member of the Agribusiness Advisory Committee at SWTC for many years and I can assure you they listen and improve their programs because of this employer input. For example, I just recently had a conversation with Southwest Tech President Duane Ford, who asked me about Hartung Brothers' need for skilled seed production technicians and the lack of qualified candidates for such jobs. Southwest Tech understands this skills gap, based on its on-going conversations with employers, and is taking initial steps toward responsively addressing it.

All businesses, and their H.R, directors, want public colleges and universities to talk to them and to respond to their new worker education and existing work training needs. Wisconsin's technical colleges have been doing that successfully for a very long time. Removing local control in favor of some sort of state level control would be a colossal mistake. Please do not approve AB 177.

Sincerely,

  
Jerry Brunner



613 N. Randolph Street – Cuba City, WI 53807  
(608) 744-7333 – info@groalliance.com

August 30, 2013

The Honorable Stephan Nass  
Chairman - Assembly Colleges and Universities Committee

Dear Chairman Nass,

I am writing to oppose Assembly Bill 177 which would be a step backward for our Technical Colleges in Wisconsin.

Our family owns and operates several businesses in Southwest Wisconsin. We employ eighty people and rely on the graduates of our Technical Schools to provide us a trained workforce. We have been pleased with the quality of those graduates.

My biggest concern of AB177 is the removal of local control. Functioning as part of a centralized system scares me as I have a poor opinion of that model as evidenced by our University system. I view the current Technical College system as efficient, creative, responsive and accountable. Our local electrical contractor is a member of our area Technical College Board. I have had several conversations about curriculum, operations and funding with him. Local control provided me that opportunity with people I know and respect verses a potentially bureaucratic and politically motivated board in Madison. Please do not disrupt one of few actual functioning public institutions of our great State.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my opinions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lou Schweigert".

Lou Schweigert  
President – Gro Alliance



**MANOWSKE WELDING CORP.**

821 S. MILITARY RD.  
P O BOX 427  
FOND DU LAC WI 54936-0427  
PHONE 920-922-3340  
FAX 920-921-3341

September 9, 2013

Dear Rep. Nass:

I am writing to you as President of Manowski Welding Corp. which produces custom fabrications using carbon steel, aluminum and stainless steel. We are headquartered in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and employ 70 persons at our 2 facilities in the Moraine Park Technical College (MPTC) district.

Manowski Welding Corp. works closely with Moraine Park. Many of our employees are graduates, and the college trains workers through customized training tailored to us. We work collaboratively with MPTC to develop and respond to training needs. They adjust their program curriculum to provide the skilled people we need today and for the future. We would not be growing as quickly or succeeding as well without Moraine Park. They are our go-to partners for skilled workers and our answer for addressing the skilled worker shortage we are currently facing.

- We have partnered with MPTC for the Boot Camp welding program and have hired 2 employees from that program already during 2013.
- We have put many of our inexperienced welders through the welding program at MPTC at the company expense to give them the education and training they need.
- Being an active member of the welding advisory committee board, I have seen significant achievement in the program's success.

On Manowski Welding's behalf, we ask you to support Moraine Park and all technical colleges by voting against AB 177. While we are not opposed to tax reform in the state of Wisconsin, we feel that the state can reduce property tax burdens without targeting technical colleges. We also feel that the current governance model provides for an effective understanding and ability to efficiently respond to the needs of the employers and communities in which each technical college resides.

Technical colleges are accountable for and can demonstrate great outcomes. We see it in MPTC graduate follow-up reports and the annual reports that we are provided every year. This bill would impact those very outcomes. If this bill is about changing local responsiveness and control, please reconsider. If it is about tax policy, address that without disabling the very core of what makes the Wisconsin Technical College System one of the best in the nation.

Sincerely,

MANOWSKE WELDING CORP.

Peter J. Manowski  
President



August 28, 2013

Representative Stephen Nass  
Room 12 West  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 8953  
Madison WI 53708

Dear Representative Nass:

I write to you in opposition of the Assembly Bill 177. As written, this bill will harm our relationship with our technical college by stripping local governance and reducing the college's ability to quickly respond to industry needs.

As the President/CEO/Owner of Northeast Wisconsin Industries, we employ more than 200 people across three shifts, manufacturing CNC precision machined components for major original equipment manufacturers here in Wisconsin, across the country, and abroad. Through years of strong, sustained growth in our business, we've enjoyed an important, productive, successful relationship with our local technical college, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC). The staff at NWTC has supported both design and actual execution/teaching of key technical training and other personnel development programs, at both their campuses and at our facilities, and often assisted by training grants from the State of Wisconsin, which they have also helped us gain. We additionally send people to classes and for degrees at their campuses. We also recruit on the campuses. NWTC staff has contributed through analysis and counsel to the on-going improvement and competitiveness of our business.

We count on NWTC to quickly respond to the needs of our business. For example, right now, NWTC staff has helped us create another round of technical training programs supported by another State grant, and will participate in their execution here yet this year, which support is extremely important to us given how many new people we have hired again this year to facilitate our continuing growth. NWTC also recently analyzed and provided key counsel related to a welding technical challenge we faced, and has likewise assisted with AWS welding certification preparation of new staff here as required by our customers. AB 177 could clearly make these kinds of collaborations more difficult in the future.

Local control drives NWTC's responsiveness to our business. The community members who serve on the NWTC's Board of Trustees understand the needs of our region and industry. They are representative of who we are, and are accountable as public officials. This is a relationship and collaboration of knowledge and resources between local industry and local education that really works.

NWTC is guided by our region's industry needs. Let's maintain the local governance and industry responsiveness that has worked for so many, for such a long time.

Thank you for considering my concerns regarding AB 177. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Chris Moore, President/CEO

cc Rep. Gary Bies

Sturgeon Bay Industrial Park | 905 S. Neenah Ave. | Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235  
Ph. 920 743-8575 | Fx. 920 743-8868

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