



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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## **Speakers Tell Job Creation Committee of Need for Securing and Enhancing Wisconsin's Infrastructure in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century** *Focus of third informational hearing relates to meeting infrastructure needs and job growth*

(Madison) - Industry and local labor leaders, as well as workforce consultants, and the heads of the Technical College System and University of Wisconsin -Extension, told the Job Creation Committee Tuesday about the need for Wisconsin to secure and enhance its infrastructure. This must happen, they said, in order for Wisconsin's economy to grow.

The committee hearing lasted nearly six hours with speakers addressing the topics of energy security and reliability, telecommunications, transportation and Wisconsin's workforce needs.

"In light of the blackout in the Northeast, the Committee heard testimony that Wisconsin needs to remove barriers for energy transmission so we can have an adequate and reliable power system that will allow for job growth in this state," said Senator Ted Kanavas (R-Brookfield), Co-Chair of the committee.

"The strength and stability of our state's economy and job market is directly related to the strength and stability of our infrastructure," Senator Leibham said. "Whether it's our electric, telecommunications, transportation or our educational system, state government can have a role in creating jobs by maintaining and enhancing a solid infrastructure."

Rebecca Ryan of Next Generation Consulting outlined the need for attracting the next generation of talented workers by creating "Talent Capitals" or communities that are perceived as places that young people want to live, work and play. Ryan said that by 2020, Wisconsin could see as many as 80,000 baby boomers retiring from the workforce.

Kanavas added, "We also heard good debate on Broadband regulation. Broadband has many forms and we have to build resilient broadband technologies that will support our innovation economy."

"This committee is about creating more jobs," Co-Chair Cathy Stepp said. "Ensuring that Wisconsin's energy, telecommunications, transportation and workforce infrastructure is prepared for the future is key to creating more jobs."

The bi-partisan committee was formed as part of the Senate Republican effort to create an initiative to grow jobs and expand Wisconsin's economy. Republicans will use testimony taken during hearings to spearhead legislation in the fall designed to stimulate the economy.

The first hearing for the Select Committee on Job Creation Aug. 5 covered regulatory reform. The second hearing on August 19<sup>th</sup> focused on capital investment and intellectual property utilization.