

LAWMAKERS UNVEIL JOBS LEGISLATION

Job Creation Act of 2003 Provides Comprehensive Plan for Economic Revitalization

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MADISON...Legislative leaders and Wisconsin business leaders joined today to unveil comprehensive legislation to create jobs in Wisconsin. The leaders said it was their intent to pass the "Job Creation Act of 2003" before the end of the fall legislative session.

"Economic development is job one, for this legislature," said Senate Majority Leader Mary Panzer (R-West Bend). "We have worked extremely hard with job creators all across the state to create a comprehensive, consensus package of reforms that will jump start Wisconsin's economic engine and keep it strong for the long run."

"This package represents a fundamental shift from a culture of red tape and regulation to a culture of free markets and job creation here in Wisconsin," said Assembly Speaker John Gard (R-Peshtigo). "Wisconsin cannot talk its way or wish its way to job creation. We need concrete action and dramatic changes in our laws to turn this economy around and put people back to work."

The Job Creation Act of 2003 was developed out of discussions with hundreds of employers and workers across the state and includes broad changes in the regulatory environment in Wisconsin. Many of the reforms were modeled on similar measures adopted by the State of Minnesota.

"We thought that the Minnesota's model was very applicable to Wisconsin because both states we share a deep love and respect for a clean environment along with a deep desire for economic growth," said Gard. "This package of reforms shows once again that a strong commitment to the environment and a strong commitment to a growing economy need not be mutually exclusive goals. In fact, they should go hand in hand."

The Job Creation Act of 2003 makes major reforms including:

- Creating the right for affected parties to petition agencies to prepare an Economic Impact Report on their regulatory proposals.
- Assuring agency accountability by providing for gubernatorial approval of all agency rulemaking prior to submittal to the Legislature for review.
- Providing an independent review by the Department of Administration (DOA) for certain proposals, including sufficiency of Economic Impact Reports, sufficiency of statutory authorities, and consistency with related state and federal programs.

- Clarifying Chapter 227 (Rulemaking Process) procedures to assure the regulated community has a fair opportunity to challenge agency actions that adversely affect their businesses.
- Modifying Chapter 285 (DNR Air Program) to assure timely issuance of air permits, and otherwise streamline and consolidate administrative hurdles impeding business expansion in Wisconsin
- Modifying Chapter 30 (DNR Navigable Waters) to streamline permit requirements currently impeding construction and related economic development activities.
- Modifying miscellaneous programs to lessen regulatory burdens identified as impeding economic growth and job creation or otherwise placing unnecessary burdens on the business community.

“Sometimes you just need to get back to basics,” said Panzer. “Wisconsin’s 19th Century, command-and-control, regulatory climate is costing us 21st Century jobs. If we want to see this state’s economy move forward we need to fundamentally reform that regulatory climate. I look forward to working with the Governor on the common principles that keep jobs and business vibrant in the state of Wisconsin.”

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