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Northwoods State Senator Says Roads Falling Apart

By TIM MORRISSEY-WISCONSIN NEWS CONNECTION • OCT 6, 2016

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MADISON, Wis. - Democratic state Sen. Janet Bewley, who represents a district in northern Wisconsin, has introduced legislation that would repeal the Manufacturing and Agricultural Tax Credit and use the money to repair roads and bridges in rural Wisconsin.

Bewley says the tax break benefits only "a handful of millionaires," and ending it would return more than \$100 million to Wisconsin counties for transportation needs, and a similar amount to the state's towns, villages and cities. She says rural roads are falling apart from lack of money for maintenance.

"All you have to do is drive on county roads in northern Wisconsin and you can feel - you can just feel the vibrations in the car as they hit those bumps," she states. "The roads are bad and tearing up our cars."

Bewley calls rural roads and bridges the backbone of Wisconsin's economy. She says the state's economy wasn't built on handouts to millionaires, but by hard work and prudent investment in the future. She says it's time to return the state's focus to working taxpayers and rebuilding infrastructure.

According to Bewley, many rural roads are so bad that people commonly advise others to avoid them. She says there are a number of communities that don't even have the funds to stockpile salt for the upcoming winter. Bewley points out even the small amount of maintenance being done is funded through borrowing money.

"That is completely ill advised, and we need to behave just as any family has to behave and watch that we don't over commit ourselves to the credit card," she stresses. Bewley adds business advocates have called for less reliance on borrowing money for road repairs. And she points to what she calls the basic unfairness of the way the state is allocating transportation funds. She says the people of rural Wisconsin send in their fair share by paying their state taxes, and don't get anything back.

"The people in my district had to watch budget after budget of money being devoted to major interchanges in Milwaukee," she states. "Now a bridge going over into Minnesota, when potholes and just basic repair of county roads just isn't taking place."

Bewley's Senate District includes portions of Vilas, Iron and Price counties.

A link to Wisconsin News Connection is *here*. (<http://newsservice.org/station.php>)

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