

Kim Kaukl  
Executive Director  
1755 Oakwood Circle  
Plain, WI 53577  
Cell Phone: (608) 553-0689  
kimkaukl@wirsas.org



President, Robert Smudde  
President-Elect, Ben Niehaus  
Secretary, Diana Bohman,  
Regional Public Library Rep  
Treasurer, Jerry Walters  
Past President, Ken Kasinski

December 3, 2018

Members of the Joint Committee on Finance:

Due to schedule conflicts on Monday, December 3, I am submitting my testimony in writing. I want to thank you for this opportunity to share our perspective on the impact of **AB 1070** and **AB 1071**. I am Kim Kaukl, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance (WiRSA), an organization of 200 plus members with 155 school districts and several CESAs, technical colleges, universities, business members and individual members. WiRSA represents the students, administrators, teachers, school board members and communities of our rural schools.

Regarding **AB 1070**, we are opposed to this bill based on the idea that it is written in as such that it is restricting the will of the people that voted in November for a change and would push partisan behavior aside and begin to see the government work in civil and bipartisan manner. This bill along with many others on today's agenda are written to usurp this will of the people. It is time to stop this gamesmanship and allow the will of the people to run its natural course.

We also have concerns with some of the language in this bill as it relates to the Common School Fund and the impact it could have on our schools' libraries. The Common School Fund was established by the State Constitution in 1848. It is the only dedicated source of state funding for K-12 school libraries in Wisconsin; in many districts, it is the only funding available for the school library program.

Article X, Section 2 of the Wisconsin State Constitution requires:

*"...all moneys and the clear proceeds of all property that may accrue to the state by forfeiture or escheat; and the clear proceeds of all fines collected in the several counties for any breach of the penal laws, and all moneys arising from any grant to the state where the purposes of such grant are not specified... shall be set apart as a separate fund to be called 'the school fund.'"*

We believe discretionary settlement funds are substantively like fines and forfeitures, but they are not currently going into the Common School Fund despite meeting the definitions laid out in Article X, Section 2.

Regarding **AB 1071**, we are opposed to this bill on principle and the added cost it will put on taxpayers. I find it interesting that the party that worked extensively to limit school referendums and special referendums due to the added cost, and as some stated, unfairness to the public, would turn around and ask for this costly move for their possible political gain, which Senator Fitzgerald didn't deny as one of the reasons for the request. I know many state clerks are opposed to the move and although we haven't seen the related cost numbers from the Legislative Fiscal Bureau, the initial cost being floated is close to \$7 million dollars. With all the short falls in funding education, roads and infrastructure, I believe it would be prudent to use this money in these areas rather than for your possible political gain.

In closing, I ask that you follow the will of the people and vote NO on these two bills and consider the same on the others on the agenda and allow the democratic process to run its natural course.

Thank them for listening and for serving the citizens of Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

*Kim Kaukl*

Kim Kaukl  
Executive Director, Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance

[kimkaukl@wirsas.org](mailto:kimkaukl@wirsas.org)

608-553-0689