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October 3, 2019

Chairmen Thiesfeldt and Olson and Members of the Joint Education Committee:

My name is Kim Kaukl, I am the Executive Director of the Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance (WiRSA). Our organization represents and supports over 220 members with 155 rural school districts, several CESAs, technical colleges, universities, businesses and individual members.

Our organization will be registering in support of Assembly Bill 465 /Senate Bill 408, relating to counting pupils enrolled in four-year-old kindergarten. This bill has strong support from our membership and the students that attend full day should be counted as full-day students no matter what their age. As we all have learned from the “No Time to Lose Report,” early childhood learning is vital to a student’s success moving forward. These are the programs that help all students start off on even footing in their educational careers.

Many districts are running full-day programs and these companion bills will continue to provide needed support for these programs and will hopefully help other districts move to full-day programing.

In conclusion, WiRSA is supportive of these companion bills. With the recommendation of the Blue-Ribbon Commission on School Funding Report, along with the “No Time To Lose Report” the time is now to move this concept forward. With that said I ask that your committees support Assembly Bill 465/Senate Bill 408.

Thank you for your time and taking my written testimony into consideration.

Kim Kaukl

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Executive Director

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*Strong Schools, Strong Communities*