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Secretary Gassman Announces \$250,000 U.S. Department of Labor Grant to Help 10 Wisconsin Counties Develop Economic Strategies

Project will assist 17-county region of Wisconsin, Minnesota

MADISON — Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman today announced a \$250,000 U.S. Department of Labor Regional Innovation Grant that will assist 10 northwest Wisconsin counties in generating interstate economic renewal and job creation strategies in partnership with Minnesota.

“This grant will help foster the economic renewal and job creation goals shared by Wisconsin and Minnesota,” Secretary Gassman said. “By analyzing the region’s industry and infrastructure, we can better anticipate future economic changes and resulting worker movement, while planning for job growth opportunities well into the future.”

The grant was awarded to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development’s Workforce Partnership Division, and DWD will collaborate in efforts to serve affected workers in the 10 Wisconsin counties.

DWD will work with the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board to monitor the implementation of the grant to ensure that it is consistent with Governor Doyle’s *Grow Wisconsin – The Next Steps* plan. The grant resources will assist in making better connections with economic development and other key partners to develop strategies to move the economy of Northwest Wisconsin forward.

The project includes the Wisconsin counties of Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor and Washburn and the Minnesota counties of Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake and St. Louis.

Regional Innovation Grants are drawn from National Emergency Grant funds to assist state workforce agencies and local workforce investment boards, as well as their key partners, in the design and development of comprehensive and strategic regional plans focused on talent development that is aligned with the demands of the 21st century economy.

National Emergency Grants are part of the secretary of labor’s discretionary fund and are awarded based on a state’s ability to meet specific guidelines. For more information on National Emergency Grants, visit www.doleta.gov/NEG.

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