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State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development
Jim Doyle, Governor
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Secretary Gassman: Southwest Wisconsin Poised for Growth under Governor Doyle's Agenda to Put Wisconsin Back to Work

State Labor Secretary addresses Lancaster business leaders, tours Southwest Tech College campus in Fennimore, joins in opening SWTC outreach site in Richland Center

LANCASTER – Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman said today that Southwest Wisconsin, like the rest of the state, is poised for growth under Governor Doyle's agenda to put Wisconsin back to work and create jobs in clean energy, advanced manufacturing and other demand sectors.

"Governor Doyle's top priority is to help businesses expand, create jobs and give workers opportunities to get those jobs, and these efforts are clearly moving in the right direction in Southwest Wisconsin," Secretary Gassman said. "During these challenging times, it is more vital than ever that education, industry and other stakeholders join forces to help advance economic growth in the region."

During a morning presentation to the Lancaster Area Chamber of Commerce, Secretary Gasman outlined Governor Doyle's job growth agenda, such as:

- **Clean Energy Jobs Act**, a comprehensive package that will create an estimated 16,000 jobs in construction and manufacturing by 2025 while helping Wisconsin gain its energy independence by increasing efficiency and conservation efforts and using more renewable energy. Wisconsin currently spends \$16 billion per year on imported energy to heat homes and fuel cars and trucks.
- **Wisconsin Green to Gold Fund**, a \$100 million revolving loan fund for manufacturers, helping them reduce their energy costs and create jobs. This will help small and mid-sized manufacturers enter the clean energy economy. Many value sustainability, but lack the capital to implement efficiency and renewable energy measures. The Governor will also invest \$1.75 million through the Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership to help small and mid-sized manufacturers use sustainable practices to give them a competitive edge.
- **Wisconsin CORE Jobs Act**, legislation to provide millions in tax credits for angel and venture capital investments, and fund additional training for workers. For example, it calls for \$1.5 million a year to be distributed to technical college district boards for advanced manufacturing skills training. Introduced by two lawmakers, the bill would expand the Governor's Accelerate Wisconsin plan.
- **Dairy Modernization Tax Credit**, a critical measure for hard-pressed dairy farmers. The Governor called on the Legislature to extend the expired dairy modernization tax credit to help dairy farmers invest in their operations.
- **Food Processing Modernization Tax Credit**, similar to dairy and livestock industry investment tax credits, this would help the food processing companies cut costs, invest in new technologies, save energy and create jobs.

(more)

To help businesses create jobs and get people back to work, Governor Doyle has created some of the strongest economic development tools in the country. His efforts have helped bring businesses and thousands of new jobs to communities throughout Wisconsin.

Secretary Gassman followed her presentation in Lancaster with a visit to the new Agriculture/Automotive Technical Center at the Southwest Wisconsin Technical College (SWTC) campus in Fennimore, which is one of three campus building projects totaling \$31.9 million. There she received an overview of new training programs and green initiatives being offered by SWTC.

Secretary Gassman concluded her tour of the region by taking part in a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new SWTC Outreach Site in Richland Center. The facility offers basic education classes and training for job seekers in healthcare and manufacturing sectors. The programs are funded in part through the Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Initiative.

A member of Governor Doyle's Cabinet, Secretary Gassman leads the Department of Workforce Development and oversees more than 1,600 employees charged with strengthening Wisconsin's workforce.