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CONTACT: DWD Communications, 608-266-2722

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Secretary Newson Highlights Governor Walker's 'Wisconsin Working' Initiative to Improve Wisconsin Business Climate

Secretary meets with Manitowoc-area employers to outline plan to connect job seekers with existing opportunities

MANITOWOC – During a luncheon today with Manitowoc area businesses, Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Reggie Newson highlighted Governor Walker's "Wisconsin Working" initiative to advance the state's economy by connecting employers that are hiring with available job seekers.

"Employers are seeking skilled workers to fill jobs in areas such as manufacturing and health care," Secretary Newson said. "The Governor's 'Wisconsin Working' initiative is good news for job seekers and employers in Manitowoc and other communities across the state. By improving the connections between employers that are hiring and job seekers who are skilled and ready to work, we will build a better business climate and boost job creation in Wisconsin."

Speaking at the Manitowoc Chamber of Commerce's "Business Connects with Government" event, Secretary Newson said DWD plays a critical role in Governor Walker's "Wisconsin Working" plan. The plan directs DWD to do the following:

- Double the number of job fairs in 2012 by holding at least 100 community job fairs throughout the state. In addition, DWD will increase efforts to match people on unemployment insurance with jobs employers have to fill. DWD will also join the Department of Veterans Affairs in holding 14 job fairs for veterans this year.
- Expand re-employment services by hiring 14 additional DWD staff to help people receiving unemployment benefits return to work quicker. With the new hires, a total of 37 DWD staff in Job Centers throughout the state will provide re-employment services to help people on unemployment succeed in finding a job.
- Strengthen its partnership with WEDC in working with employers expanding operations in Wisconsin. In partnership with WEDC, DWD will work to place UI claimants in available jobs whenever possible.
- Play a leading role on the new College and Workforce Readiness Council to ensure and sustain a skilled workforce in the years ahead. Representing stakeholders and partners, the Council will work to improve student readiness for college and careers through a variety of measures, including designing shorter and less costly degree programs aimed at filling high-need positions.

Prior to the luncheon, Secretary Newson toured Orion Energy systems, a nationally competitive manufacturer of environment-friendly lighting and alternative energy solutions, including photovoltaic solar panels and wind turbines.