******

**Advocacy Digest | November 21, 2023**

**Brad Boycks, Executive Director**

**Bill to Provide Additional Funds for Manufacturing and Construction Education Passes State Assembly**

A bill authored by Representative Chance Green (R-Grand View) and Senator Rob Stafsholt (R-New Richmond) recently passed the State Assembly on a bipartisan vote of [91 to 7](https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2023/related/votes/assembly/av0113). Thank you to the WBA members that responded to our recent VoterVoice request to contact your member of the assembly to support the bill.

Assembly Bill 550 (AB 550) will:

* + Add construction along with manufacturing equipment to the list of eligible equipment that schools can receive dollars to acquire.
	+ An applicant that is awarded a grant under this section shall use the grant moneys awarded for the enhancement or improvement of a technical education facility or for the acquisition of equipment that is used in advanced manufacturing or construction fields in the workplace, together with any software necessary for the operation of that equipment and any instructional material necessary to train pupils in the operation of that equipment.”
	+ Increase the maximum grant that can be received by a school or multiple schools working together from $50,000 to $100,000.

WBA has been supportive of AB 550 as it has moved through the state assembly. Our lobbying efforts will now focus on moving the bill through the same process in the state senate and getting the bill to Governor Evers prior to the end of the legislative session in early 2024.

**Restore Main Street and Vacancy-to-Vitality Programs Now Available!**

We are excited to share with you that as a result of our lobbying efforts and passage of the five workforce housing bills this past summer, two new programs - Restore Main Street and Vacancy-to-Vitality loan programs - are now available to developers.

Interested developers, or others interested in the programs are encouraged to review the program details including term sheets, summary overviews, award plans, and timelines for each program. Applications for the first loan cycle are due to WHEDA by December 29, 2023.

For more information on Restore Main Street, [Click Here](https://wisconsinbuildersassociation.growthzoneapp.com/ap/r/5c683f4966ac4d48b51c62f7a13e4278).

For more information on Vacancy-to-Vitality, [Click Here](https://wisconsinbuildersassociation.growthzoneapp.com/ap/r/3120eb9219e8432f8e35fdc829f905fa).