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## **Southeast Wisconsin Receives Federal Funding for Workforce Development**

**Southeast Wisconsin** – Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman announced today that the seven-county regional alliance in southeast Wisconsin has received an initial grant of \$500,000, with additional opportunities to access up to \$4.5 million, to advance workforce development efforts in the area. The funding is available from the Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) program from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL).

“I am very pleased that DWD’s initial investment of \$150,000 to create the Regional Workforce Alliance and our continued support with a subsequent \$110,000 grant has created such a successful partnership for the seven-county southeastern Wisconsin region. The U.S. DOL has recognized the importance of the efforts of the region’s three Workforce Development Boards and the city of Milwaukee, and has pledged their continuing support, allowing this part of the state to take its regional efforts to the next level,” said Secretary Gassman.

The region includes Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington, and Waukesha counties. This area is one of 13 regions nationwide designated to receive a total of \$65 million in new WIRED funds from the U.S. Department of Labor.

These same seven counties comprise one of seven regional partnership initiatives throughout Wisconsin supported by the Growing Regional Opportunities in Wisconsin (GROW) grant program. Those partnerships bring regional economic development, workforce development, and education leaders and systems together to help regions compete in the global economy. Administered by DWD with the sponsorship of the Governor’s Council on Workforce Investment, the GROW grant program was established to help advance Governor Jim Doyle’s “Grow Wisconsin” agenda.

The awards represent a second generation of funding under the WIRED program, which the Department of Labor initiated in 2005. During the first generation, regions were each awarded planning grants of \$100,000 to begin implementing regional strategies.