

**IRON COUNTY
LOCAL IMPACT COMMITTEE**
300 TACONITE STREET
HURLEY, WISCONSIN 54534

December 3rd, 2012

Dear Senator Cullen,

During the informational hearing on mining on Thursday, November 29th, some issues came up that I feel need further clarification. Please allow me to explain.

Some of the discussion at the hearing was regarding the need for community planning related to possible mining-induced growth. The Iron County Local Mining Impact Committee has already met with Jason Laumann of Northwest Regional Planning. He will be giving us a cost estimate of an impact analysis at our next meeting on December 12th, 2012. The Iron County Local Impact Committee has invited the members of the impact committees from the Towns of Anderson and Morse to attend as well as representatives from the Ashland County Board, which has not yet appointed a committee. The hope is that we can pool our resources to help pay for these studies.

Funding for these studies may be available through Coastal Management or other zoning grants. We will explore all our options.

In addition to planning, our communities also recognize the need to update our zoning ordinances, and seek legal and technical expertise to protect our interests, some of which has already been done.

During the hearing, lawmakers brought up the possibility of having a fixed dollar amount available by statute to provide local communities with the resources for planning and other needs related to the return of the mining industry. The possibility of using Notice of Intent Payments also arose, but an opinion given to me by Jennifer Western of the Department of Revenue states that these payments can't be used for costs incurred prior to the notice of intent to mine. This protects the local impact fund if the company does not proceed to a notice of intent.

However, provisions already exist in current law to provide for these needs. According to information received last year, \$211,000 remains in the Mining Investment Local Impact Fund. And discretionary payments are clearly allowed for the purposes our local communities are already planning for. Please refer to the Administrative Code Chapter Tax 13 Investment and Local Impact Fund, specifically 13.08 on allowable discretionary payments:

(f) Legal counsel and technical consultants to represent and assist municipalities appearing before state agencies on matters relating to metalliferous mineral mining and for processing mining-related permits or other approvals required by the municipality.

(g) The preparation of area-wide community service plans which identify social, economic, educational, and environmental impacts associated with mining and which set forth a plan for minimizing the impacts.

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DENNIS DEROSSO
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(h) Local impact committee operations, under s. 293.33, Stats.

Our communities are unable to seek discretionary grants as provided by current law because there are no appointments to the mining board. The Iron County Local Impact Committee has written 3 letters to Gov. Walker requesting reappointment of the mining board. The only reply we received was to our May 24th, 2012 letter stating that not enough time was available to meet the June 1st deadline for requests as outlined in Chapter Tax 13.07(2)(a). Letters from both the Taylor County and Iron County Impact Committees were also written to you regarding these reappointments, but no replies were received. A follow-up call to your office yielded no results.

All requests for discretionary grants need to go through a joint impact committee pursuant to 293.33(4). The Towns of Anderson and Morse and also Iron County have already formed a joint committee. We are hoping that Ashland County will have an impact committee appointed with a representative for the joint impact committee prior to the January 9th, 2013 meeting of the joint committee. However, we cannot seek discretionary grants until the mining board is reappointed.

Our committees are doing all we can to follow the guidelines put forth by the State of Wisconsin. We are respectfully requesting that our lawmakers assist us. Therefore, once again, we ask the Senate Committee on Mining to strongly encourage Governor Walker to reappoint members to the Mining Investment Local Impact Fund Board. The courtesy of a reply is requested.

Sincerely,

Leslie Kolesar

Chairwoman, Iron County Local Impact Committee

Cc: Governor Scott Walker

Town of Anderson Local Impact Committee

Town of Morse Local Impact Committee

Taylor County Local Impact Committee

Ashland County Board Chairman, Pete Russo

Senator Robert Jauch

Representative Janet Bewley

Wisconsin Towns Association

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