

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Senate Bill 28, known as the “Local Lumber Use Law” was passed by the Wisconsin Legislature on March 13, 2008, the last day of the 2007-08 legislative session, after being introduced on February 7, 2007. Passage of this bill represents over five years of hard work by Senator Roger Breske and Joe Hovel, chair of Partners in Forestry Landowner Cooperative, while advised by Terry Mace of the Department of Natural Resources and Robert Govett of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. The Local Lumber Use Law allows local, small-scale sawmillers to utilize their own forest resources in home construction after undergoing education and testing that allow them to certify their lumber.

SB 28 allows local building inspectors, guided by their experience, to acknowledge the integrity of Wisconsin’s forest resources. It also allows landowners to utilize sustainably harvested materials at the local level, enhancing local communities and conserving valuable fuel. As implemented, the Uniform Dwelling Code penalized small-scale mill owners or builders by requiring that all lumber utilized in construction be graded and certified through a process that only large operations could afford. SB 28 allows experienced, trained millers and builders to grade and utilize their own local resources.

According to Senator Breske, “[SB 28] is a simple, common sense proposal that should have been law a long time ago.” Attesting to that statement is the bipartisan support the bill garnered. Partners in Forestry represented a number of their members in supporting and developing this bill, and Joe Hovel stated that, “This bill strengthens local economies, encourages forest management, allows loggers and landowners to enjoy higher prices in the free market, conserves fuel, and encourages some of our very best self thinking craftsmen to produce their very best while adding to Wisconsin’s infrastructure.”

The Governor has not yet confirmed when or where the bill will be signed.

For more information on Partners in Forestry Landowner Cooperative, contact Joe Hovel at 715-479-8528 or logcabin@nnex.net