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To: Senate Committee on Transportation and Local Government
From: Curt Witynski, J.D., Deputy Director, League of Wisconsin Municipalities
Date: April 7, 2021
Re: SB 187, Allowing village trustees to be hired as village employees

The League of Wisconsin Municipalities supports SB 187, allowing village board members to be employed by the village and receive an hourly wage, not exceeding \$15,000 each year, as a village employee. The bill mirrors a current law provision allowing town board members to be hired by the town and earn wages up to \$15,000 annually.

The league worked with the authors on drafting this bill because we regularly hear from our members about the challenges small communities face when trying to fill vacancies in positions such as deputy clerk, crossing guard, caretaker of the cemetery, and seasonal help with mowing or plowing. In small villages, like towns, often the most qualified or most logical, or sometimes the only person available to fill a village job opening is a board member.

This bill is necessary because common law rules and statutory provisions prohibit a municipal governing body member from being employed by the community while serving on the governing body. This bill is limited to villages. It would not apply to cities.

We urge the committee to recommend passage of SB 187. Thank you for considering our comments.