

STATE SENATOR • MICHAEL PRUSI • 38TH DISTRICT

Prusi Press Release

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Senator Prusi Secures More Than \$2 Million in Vital Funding for Rural Schools

Unique Geographic Challenges Faced by Schools to be Aided with Special Funding

LANSING—Senator Mike Prusi (D-Ishpeming) secured \$2,025,000 in education funding yesterday for geographically isolated rural schools in the Upper Peninsula and around Michigan. These schools face unique geographic and population circumstances that put a significant strain on their funding just getting kids to and from school.

"As I travel throughout the district, I see firsthand how far apart some of these communities are. Due to minimal population, many school districts have been forced to consolidate and cover extremely large areas," said Sen. Prusi. "This funding will help accommodate the unique challenges they face, such as transportation costs, and make it easier on their overall budgets to provide an education to the kids they serve."

A portion of the funding—\$750,000—goes to school districts that operate grades K-12, have fewer than 250 students enrolled, and are situated in the Upper Peninsula at least 30 miles from any other public school building, such as geographically isolated island districts. Sen. Prusi's amendment to the School Aid Budget, Senate Bill 1107, provides an additional \$1.275 million to districts with five or fewer pupils per square mile and that have a total square mileage greater than 200.

"These are truly remote parts of our state, but the students' dedication to getting an education and their district's efforts to ensure they can attend classes should be matched with support from the state to ease that burden," said Prusi. "I appreciate the support Governor Granholm and my House colleagues have shown for this funding, and I sincerely thank my colleagues in the Senate for their recognition of this unique issue as well."

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Sen. Prusi serves on the Senate Finance, Natural Resources & Environmental Affairs, Judiciary, and Energy Policy & Public Utilities Committees. He represents the 38th Senate District, which includes all Upper Peninsula counties west of Luce County.