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**Advocacy Digest | May 19, 2022**

**Brad Boycks, Executive Director**

**Wisconsin Builders Association Endorses Rebecca Kleefisch for Governor**

The Wisconsin Builders Association (WBA) announced their endorsement of Rebecca Kleefisch in her campaign for Governor.

“Rebecca has long been an advocate for the homebuilding and construction industries,” said Cory Sillars, WBA President. “We worked closely with her during her time as Lt. Governor and have continued to receive her support since then. We are proud to support her and know she will continue to advance Wisconsin as its next Governor.”

As the 44th Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin, Rebecca championed workforce and economic development. She created the Governor’s Small Business Summit, an event that allowed small business owners to access state leaders, the Small Business Academy, a free seminar designed for minority and female entrepreneurs. Additionally, she has traveled the state as a Jobs Ambassador, encouraging Wisconsin workers to choose well-paying jobs in the construction trades.

"I'm honored to have the backing of the Wisconsin Builders Association for my campaign for governor,” said Kleefisch. “Worker shortages, unaffordable materials, and bureaucratic permit logjams are adding massive costs to building Wisconsin. I have the experience to get to work solving those problems on Day One. Those who build Wisconsin know I'll get us back on track through transformational tax reform, fewer regulations, and strengthening vocational training, and I thank them for their support.”

**Wisconsin Builders Association Wins Lawsuit Against Village of Sussex**

WBA recently won a land development lawsuit it pursued against the Village of Sussex. WBA financed the lawsuit through the Builders Legal Action and Research (BLAR) Fund, with assistance from both the Metropolitan Builders Association and Madison Area Builders Association.

“The Village of Sussex was requiring developers to enter into developer agreements that placed surety bond requirements on those developers beyond what is allowed by statute,” said WBA outside legal counsel Robert Procter, Axley Attorneys. “The Village’s requirements placed a significant financial burden on the development of single-family housing—a cost ultimately borne by the homebuyer.”

In 2015 and 2017, the WBA and other housing stakeholders worked with state legislators to adopt statutory rules as to the amount of surety, the type of surety, and the length of time it would be in place to balance the need to protect the municipalities and the need to limit the costs that such requirements placed on housing. The Village of Sussex argued that it could impose requirements in excess of the statute by having developers enter into developer agreements as a condition of the approval of a subdivision. Waukesha County Circuit Court Judge Michael Maxwell issued a declaratory order striking the Village’s ordinances that conflicted with state law, and permanently enjoined the Village from imposing requirements beyond those allowed by the statute.

“In a time when there is a critical lack of housing, this is an important win not only for developers, but homeowners all across the state,” said WBA Executive Director Brad Boycks. “In this instance, the requirements Sussex was enforcing were not only illegal, but were unnecessarily delaying the development and building process.”

**Wisconsin Builders Association Applauds Signing of Housing Bills**

WBA applauded Governor Evers over the signing of legislation targeting contractors and workforce housing.

Assembly Bill 607, authored by Representative Penterman and Senator Roth, will allow the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority to issue low or no interest loans to fund the rehabilitation of certain residential properties.

“As the shortage of affordable homes is ever present throughout the state, we are thrilled to see some relief being provided to those whose income does not exceed 120 percent of the median household income,” said Brad Boycks, WBA Executive Director. “AB 607 will provide those individuals who own homes built before 1980, an opportunity to obtain a loan to assist in structural improvements and the removal of lead paint.”

Additionally, Evers also signed AB 994, authored by Representative Spiros and Senator Petrowski, which makes changes to the contractor certification requirements. The bill adds categories for eligible credits to focus on key areas of need that will improve the knowledgebase of those who hold the credential required to receive a building permit to build or remodel a single-family home.

“Requiring accounting, lien law, ethics, and best business practices are essential for those building professionals seeking certification as a dwelling contractor,” said Cory Sillars, WBA President. “The bill will require similar requirements for those taking continuing education courses and ensures those licensed professionals who are constructing and remodeling homes have received necessary education to ensure they are building to top standards.”