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Via E-mail JFannin@co.forest.wi.us

Forest County
Land & Water Resource (Zoning) Committee
200 East Madison Street
Crandon, WI. 54520

Re: Public Comments on the Proposed Mining Ordinance

Dear Committee Members,

Wisconsin Infrastructure Investment Now, Inc. (WIIN) is a nonprofit organization, and its mission is to educate the public, elected officials and regulators on the societal and economic benefits of the responsible investment in, and expansion of, transportation facilities, renewable and traditional energy projects, mining and other infrastructure projects. WIIN thanks the Committee for the opportunity to comment on an ordinance regulating metallic mining in the Forest County.

The recently-enacted state legislation created a framework to allow for tremendous economic growth. A typical mine could create 300+ family-sustaining jobs in the local community. The Flambeau mine, for example, utilized local people for 85% of its workforce. Taxes and fees to local and state governments from a single mine would be over \$27 million. These numbers don't take into account the indirect economic development that would result from a new facility, including businesses needed to support project operations, housing development, and even increased spending at local restaurants and other establishments.

Despite rhetoric and fear-inducing hyperbole, mining can be safely and cleanly developed in Wisconsin, particularly in light of recent technological advances in the industry. It is imperative that, as the mining industry is renewed in Wisconsin, regulators take balanced, unbiased and responsible approaches to industry analyses and site-specific projects. The proposed ordinance appears to strike the proper balance between local control of health, safety and the environment and industry development. For example, we understand that current draft ordinance allows for job creators and the community to work together to establish appropriate terms for a potential project through a local agreement, as opposed to imposing generic standards or prohibitions without regard for project specifics.

Furthermore, local sourcing of resources means local control over workplace safety and environmental standards. For example, according to the Office of the United States Trade Representative, the United States imported \$1.7 billion in copper from Chile in 2016. See <https://ustr.gov/countries-regions/americas/chile>. The workforce safety and environmental standards utilized in Chile are less stringent than Wisconsin's standards, although Chile continues to develop and improve its

environmental regulations. Additionally, the transportation costs (financial and environmental) are largely avoided if resources are sourced locally.

Again, WIIN appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed mining ordinance. We look forward to working with County officials as the ordinance process progresses.

Sincerely,

/s/ Tom Schaitel

Tom Schaitel
WIIN Board Member and Secretary