Office of Senator Willis E. Blackshear Jr.
State Senator

Chair Koehler, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Ingram and members of the Workforce Development Committee, thank you for allowing me to present sponsor testimony for SB 331 alongside my joint sponsor Senator Wilson.

SB 331 would allow public servants in traditionally tipped positions to accept tips. As we've heard from many of our local governments, attracting and retaining employees can be very challenging. It's even more challenging when these employees can take on a similar role in the private sector and make substantially more with tips. So, by allowing service employees to accept tips we are evening the playing field for local governments looking to hire qualified staff.

This legislation is tailored to positions that are traditionally tipped, meaning we are not extending this provision to elected officials or those in leadership positions in government. We know that tipping could comprise the integrity of those with broader decision-making authority, so we were careful about ensuring that this provision only applies to traditionally tipped positions. Lastly, this legislation clarifies that the public agency employing a tipped worker would not be able to use the gratuity as a credit towards the minimum wage rate.

Chair Koehler, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Ingram and members of the Workforce Development Committee, thank you again for allowing us to present sponsor testimony for SB 331, and we would be happy to take any questions you may have.