

**TO: Members, Joint Committee on Finance
Assembly Speaker Robin Vos
Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald**

FROM: Scott Manley, Senior Vice President of Government Relations

DATE: August 28, 2017

RE: Superior Exposition District

Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce (WMC) supports inclusion of language in the 2017-2019 biennial budget to allow the City of Superior to create an Exposition District. We respectfully request that you support this proposal.

Since 1960, Superior has lost nearly 16 percent of its population while its neighbor Duluth, Minnesota continues to grow and prosper. The Exposition District would allow Superior the opportunity to generate revenue from tourists and others who utilize the hospitality industry to fund local development projects that would increase tourism and business activity.

During November 2016 election, 82 percent of eligible voters in Superior casting voted – it was an extremely high turnout. Of those who voted, 75.5 percent voted in favor of a local exposition district tax on food, beverages, lodging and rental cars.

Although WMC generally opposes the imposition of higher taxes and adding to what is already an unacceptably high tax burden on Wisconsinites, the taxpayers of Superior have sent a strong and clear message at the ballot box that they support imposing this tax upon themselves. In addition, the Superior Exposition District is supported by the local business community, public entities, government, local foundations and associations in the area.

For these reasons, WMC respectfully asks that you support the authorization of a Superior Exposition District in the current biennial state budget.