



# NEWS

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## **FORWARD WISCONSIN BOARD ENDORSES PLAN FOR ADDED STATE FUNDING** New Grow Wisconsin Initiative Would Bring Forward Wisconsin back to 1984 “Buying Power”

**MADISON** - - The Forward Wisconsin Board of Directors held their annual meeting yesterday at American Family Insurance Company and officially endorsed a proposal by Governor Doyle to increase state funding in Forward Wisconsin by \$590,000 in 2006-07.

On Monday, Governor Doyle announced his new economic development plan: the 2005 Grow Wisconsin Agenda. The plan includes an initiative to bring Forward Wisconsin’s total annual state funding to \$910,000 with \$590,000 in new state dollars combining with the existing state funding of \$320,000. Forward Wisconsin has traditionally received \$500,000 in state funding – the amount the organization received in 1984 - but has not been at that state funding level since 2001. To obtain the state funding, Forward Wisconsin is required to raise an equal amount of dollars from the private sector; a one-to-one match requirement that doubles the impact of more state funding.

“We have been working hard toward increasing both the public and private sector investment in Forward Wisconsin,” said Jerry Franke, Forward Wisconsin Vice-Chairman and President of WISPARK, LLC. “We are very pleased with Governor Doyle’s proposal to increase state funding for Forward Wisconsin. It ultimately allows us to attract more businesses, jobs and investment to the state, while also giving us the opportunity to bring more private sector partners into our organization.”

“We are looking forward to working with our four legislative board members, their colleagues in the Legislature and Governor Doyle to make this additional funding for Forward Wisconsin a reality,” said Pepi Randolph, Forward Wisconsin President. “The additional funding is critical to extending Wisconsin’s business marketing efforts to bring more economic development to the state and making Wisconsin more competitive with other states, regions and countries.”

Under Governor Doyle’s proposal for additional funding, Forward Wisconsin’s state investment level would be brought back to what it was when the organization started in 1984, given the inflation rate over the past 21+ years.

Forward Wisconsin, Inc., ([ForwardWI.com](http://ForwardWI.com)), created in 1984, is a unique public-private state marketing organization. Its job is marketing Wisconsin’s business advantages outside the state to educate decision-makers on the positive benefits of living, working, playing and doing business in Wisconsin. Forward Wisconsin receives about 60 percent of its funding from private sources with the balance coming from the State of Wisconsin. Over 75 Wisconsin businesses invest in Forward Wisconsin. Governor Jim Doyle is Forward Wisconsin’s Chairman of the Board.