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Contact: Carla Vigue, Office of the Governor, 608-261-2162

Governor Doyle Signs Bill Into Law to Promote Tourism in Wisconsin

RHINELANDER – Governor Jim Doyle today signed a bill into law that creates clear and fair pier regulations.

“People come from all over the world to Wisconsin year after year to enjoy our great state, and our beautiful lakes and rivers are second to none,” Governor Doyle said. “We need to preserve the experience of our lakes, so families can continue to enjoy summer days in Northern Wisconsin as I did with my family. This bill creates clear and fair rules for property and business owners across the state, to ensure residents and tourists will be able to enjoy our waterfronts for years to come.”

Assembly Bill 297 allows home and business owners to keep their existing piers and wharves if they register with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and do not interfere with the rights of other riparian owners. The bill creates new regulations enforceable by the DNR for the construction of new piers and the replacement of existing piers.

New permitting requirements in the bill prevent the DNR from refusing or denying a permit for pier and wharves built on or before February 6, 2004, if they are in compliance. Under the law, pier owners will be allowed to repair or maintain their structures without a new permit.

The bill also recalculates the motorboat gas tax formula, and provides the DNR with funding for the permitting and exemption of piers, wharves, and other structures.

Governor Doyle thanked Representative Scott Gunderson and Senator Roger Breske for their work on the bill.

Governor Doyle was joined by business owners, Senator Breske, and members of the community and tourist industry. The event was held at the Holiday Acres Resort in Rhineland.