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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MOEN SAYS McCALLUM BREAKS PROMISE

State Senator Rod Moen said today he was stunned by Governor McCallum's announcement that he would veto a provision in the budget adjustment bill that would permit Ashley Furniture of Arcadia to expand on land it owns in the community.

"I was assured by the Governor, in his own office, that if legislation providing for an Ashley expansion reached his desk, he would sign it into law. He has now broken that promise and disappointed a lot of people in western Wisconsin, not just me," he said.

Moen said he has been working for several years on both administrative and statutory remedies for Ashley's expansion problem.

"The Department of Natural Resources, it was clear, would never give Ashley the permits for expansion on this property, which the department categorized as wetlands.

"I added an amendment to the 1999-01 budget bill that allowed for the project, and it was signed into law by Governor Thompson, but a court later ruled that that legislation, which was different than the vetoed provision, was inappropriately included in a budget bill," Moen said.

Moen said he appealed to McCallum earlier this year for an administrative remedy for the problem, but the Governor declined. Moen said, however, that McCallum said he would sign legislation exempting Ashley from DNR regulations into law if it reached his desk.

"Knowing that I had the Governor's word, I introduced the amendment to the budget adjustment bill on the Senate floor and it passed, 22-11. The conference committee agreed that it ought to stay and it was included in the budget adjustment bill sent to the Governor. The Governor could have saved everyone a lot of time and energy had he been upfront about his position months ago," Moen said.

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