



News from

Congressman Ron Kind

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S THIRD
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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Rep. Kind Advises Residents Traveling Abroad on How to Avoid Passport Problems

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Ron Kind today advised western Wisconsin residents traveling abroad to apply early for a passport. Due to changes in federal law that now require a passport for air travel to Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, the Caribbean, and Bermuda, the State Department's Passport Agencies are experiencing an unprecedented number of applications, resulting in severe processing delays.

Passport Services is expecting to process more than one million more passports this year than they anticipated, bringing the total to 17 million passports this year alone. Currently it is taking 10-12 weeks to process passport applications. Rep. Kind is currently working with the appropriators to ensure we are providing the agency with the adequate funding for staff and resources to deal with the increase.

Although Rep. Kind's Office has in the past been able to help expedite passports that have gotten lost in the system or in cases of emergency, given the sheer number of passport applications being processed at this time, the office is encouraging citizens to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Travelers should apply for a passport at least 12 weeks in advance. If the trip is sooner than that, travelers are advised to pay the expedite fee. If the country also requires a visa, travelers should provide for additional time.
- If a traveler has not received their passport ten days before their trip, contact Rep. Kind's Eau Claire District Office for assistance in expediting the process at 715-831-9214.
- Travelers can get a passport, same day, by driving to the Chicago Passport Agency. To do so, one will need a new application, new photos, a birth certificate, and proof of departure. The Chicago office makes every effort to serve those with departure dates within 48 hours. Representative Kind's office can arrange for an appointment at the Chicago office. Applicants should plan to be at there as early as possible (8:30 a.m.) and be prepared to spend the entire day.

Right now, the public is limited to calling the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) within 14 days of travel at 877-487-2778 to inquire about the status of their application.

More information is also available on the State Department website at www.travel.state.gov.