



News from

# Congressman Ron Kind

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S THIRD  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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## Rep. Kind Acts to Ease Passport Backlog

**Washington, DC** – U.S. Rep. Ron Kind voted in support of legislation to ease the backlog that has made it difficult for many western Wisconsin families to receive passports. The *Passport Backlog Reduction Act* was unanimously approved by the House yesterday.

“My office has heard from many western Wisconsin residents who waited months to receive a passport or even had to change long-planned vacations because of this backlog,” Rep. Kind said. “This common sense legislation will make it easier for the State Department to get the help they need to process outstanding applications and send travelers on their way.”

Passport requests skyrocketed following the implementation of a new law requiring Americans traveling by air to Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Bermuda to hold a passport. The increase has resulted in significant delays with many waiting months to receive a passport.

The Passport Backlog Reduction Act gives the State Department the ability to hire retired former staffers who are trained and authorized to process passport applications. Current law denies retirement benefits to these retirees if they exceed strict caps on wages earned and hours worked. The legislation approved by the House waives these caps and makes it possible for the retired workers to return to work and help ease the passport shortage.

“Americans shouldn’t let red tape delay or derail their vacation plans,” Rep. Kind said. “The legislation we passed this week will help ease the passport backlog and my office will continue to do everything possible to ensure residents of western Wisconsin receive their passports in a timely fashion.”

Rep. Kind’s office has already assisted a number of residents who have had difficulty obtaining a passport. Any resident of the Third Congressional District needing assistance with a delayed passport application is invited to contact Janet Slind in Rep. Kind’s Eau Claire office at (715) 831-9214.