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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### SHARP DECLINE OF STARTUPS IN RURAL WISCONSIN

[May 24, 2022 – ] A newly released study has found that since 1978, the number of startups in rural Wisconsin has dropped by 50%. The [“Rural Innovation Report.”](#) created by the Wisconsin Startup Coalition (WSC), the University of Wisconsin Department of Agricultural & Applied Economics, and powered by Alliant Energy, found that while startup activity in rural areas of Wisconsin appears to be higher when compared to urban areas of the state, rural startups have steeply declined. The study also found that compared to other states, Wisconsin has an average level of business closings, but a below average level of new businesses being created.

The report’s lead authors, Tessa Conroy, Steven Deller, and Ted Callon of the University of Wisconsin, were intrigued by the findings, and documented why creating new businesses can be challenging: To get to market, an idea needs to be refined, combined with capital investments and business savvy, and supported from the earliest stages to the final stages of actualizing the plan. In some cases, entrepreneurs partner with others to bring a project to fruition, which further adds to the timeline and complexity of bringing a new business to life. And since entrepreneurs are often pursuing their first business venture, minor obstacles can be major setbacks without the proper network of support, connections, and resources.

**“Wisconsin is fortunate to have many small communities with innovative people. Our elected officials have a huge opportunity to ensure that entrepreneurship is supported across the state. This report establishes a baseline for impactful, collaborative policy work to make Wisconsin one of the best places for early-stage startups.” – Lydia Zeller, Wisconsin Startup Coalition Board Chair**

**“At Alliant Energy, leveraging our local presence to help businesses succeed is just one way we strive to serve customers and build stronger communities. Rural communities are home to some of the most creative, talented and hardworking individuals you’ll find – and that pioneering spirit is what we need to jumpstart economic growth and move us toward a brighter future.” – JP Brummond, Vice President of Customer & Community Engagement at Alliant Energy**

To keep Wisconsin competitive, efforts need to be made to support startups. Entrepreneurial individuals with the skills and talent to recognize, develop, and steward new products to market are

essential to our future success. To learn more, join us for a panel discussion on June 15 at 11:30 a.m. at Irontek Co-Working Space, 635 3rd St, Beloit, WI 53511. Please visit [wistartupcoalition.org](http://wistartupcoalition.org) under the 'Rural Innovation Report' to register for the event.

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***About the Wisconsin Startup Coalition:** The Wisconsin Startup Coalition (WSC) supports entrepreneurs and startup founders, working to improve the early-stage ecosystems of emerging businesses. WSC actively collaborates and brings together people to influence change to build a foundation for better startup growth.*

***About Alliant Energy:** Alliant Energy Corporation (NASDAQ: LNT) provides regulated energy service to 985,000 electric and 425,000 natural gas customers across Iowa and Wisconsin. Alliant Energy's mission is to deliver energy solutions and exceptional service customers and communities count on – safely, efficiently and responsibly. Interstate Power and Light Company and Wisconsin Power and Light Company are Alliant Energy's two public energy companies. Alliant Energy is a component of the Nasdaq CRD Sustainability Index, Bloomberg's 2022 Gender-Equality Index, and the S&P 500. For more information, visit [alliantenergy.com](http://alliantenergy.com) and follow Alliant Energy on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).*