



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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State Budget Update

For the past several weeks, the entire legislature has been working very hard to review the governor's proposed budget. The document is more than 1,000 pages long, so there is much to absorb.

As we move forward with this budgeting process, it's helpful to remember the **3 R's: Restraint** when it comes to government spending. It is my goal not to raise taxes on Wisconsin taxpayers. **Reform** in the way that government is run. I hope we find ways to simplify the tax code and enhance education in Wisconsin. Most importantly, we must **Reinvest** in our most vulnerable citizens, invest in our future, and create an environment to develop jobs.

I thought you might like to see some recent highlights from the Joint Committee on Finance .

The Joint Committee on Finance made the following *reductions* to the governor's proposed budget:

\$32.6 million all funds

~ \$7,619,400 in GPR funds

48 FTE positions eliminated

\$2.8 million in overall bonding

Circus World

The Governor's proposal to provide funding and positions for the Circus World Museum was voted down by Joint Finance committee members by a unanimous vote of 16-0.

Although the state owns all of the assets of the Baraboo attraction, a private foundation, Circus World Museum Foundation, has operated the museum since the 1959. It receives its revenues through fundraising, admissions, donations and museum store sales. The committee decided to have the museum remain a locally-operated private-

public enterprise.

The Governor had proposed transferring management to the State Historical Society. That plan would have resulted in 10 new state employees and cost the state more than \$3.7 million in the next two years.

Transportation Omnibus motion

This motion incorporated all of the separate parts of transportation up for vote. The highlights are that the committee invested \$52 million in our Freight Rail preservation (8 million less than the Governor) and \$15.9 million into Harbor assistance programs. The committee also required that DOT include on the application form for a driver's license or identification card a question as to whether the applicant wishes to designate an additional \$2 to support efforts of Donate Life Wisconsin.

The committee's motion also deleted in its entirety a proposal to create 28 new positions for inspectors to monitor and enforce overweight fines and motor carriers. Deletion of this proposal saved the state \$3.8 million over the biennium.

Veterans

The committee retained the Governor's recommendation to transfer to \$5.3 million GPR to the veteran's fund and report to the Joint Finance Committee every other year that describes the current condition of the veteran's trust fund. The committee also voted to create a reimbursement program for veterans who attend tribal colleges, and provide a one-time \$500,000 grant to VETransfer, Inc.

WHEDA

A vote of 16-0 was taken on the motion to move to transfer \$1 million from the DFI gifts and grants appropriation and to direct the Attorney General to transfer \$2,500,000 in discretionary mortgage settlement funds to WHEDA. This money will be used to fund grants for the demolition of abandoned, blighted properties in Wisconsin.

State Agencies Reduce Overtime Costs by 22% in 2012

The Department of Administration (DOA) recently released overtime data compiled for calendar year 2012, which shows there was an overall reduction of 22 percent in overtime costs across all state agencies.

Along with the release of the overtime data, Governor Walker released the following statement:

2012 was the first full year that state government operated under the reforms contained in Act 10. These structural reforms saved taxpayers more than a billion dollars, including millions of dollars in state employee overtime.

Because of the difficult choices and long-term structural reforms we made in past, Wisconsin now has a surplus. The reduction in overtime costs improves our outlook for the 2013-15 budget, which is working its way through the Legislature.

I will continue to look for ways to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse in government as we work to make our state operate as efficiently and effectively as possible. These savings were achieved because of strong leadership and effective management at each agency.

Below are a few highlights of the information recently released from DOA:

- Overtime across all state agencies fell from \$63.1 million in calendar year 2011 to \$49.4 million in 2012, which represents a reduction of 22 percent;
- Total overtime in the Department of Corrections fell from \$37.7 million in 2011 to \$29.1 million in 2012, which represents a reduction of 23 percent;
- Total overtime in the Department of Health Services fell from \$8.9 million in 2011 to \$7.6 million in 2012, which represents a reduction of 15 percent; and,
- Total overtime in the Department of Department of Transportation fell from \$5.7 million in 2011 to \$4.1 million in 2012, which represents a reduction of 28 percent.

Parking Invoice Scam

Wisconsin residents on opposite sides of the state have reported receiving fraudulent bills in the mail for supposed parking violations. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) is asking consumers statewide to be on the lookout for fake invoices or threats of collections for phony parking fees.

In early April, a Door County and a Pierce County resident each received a mailing from “Parking Collection Services” claiming that they owed \$35 and \$50 respectively. The mailing listed a Milwaukee post office box as an address. The letters claimed to be a “notice of Assignment to a Collection Agency” for these fines.

The Door County resident:

- Supposedly owed payment for unauthorized parking in an “Imperial Parking” lot in Milwaukee in January. Although the license number on the form matched one of her cars, that car has never been driven in Milwaukee.
- The consumer called the number listed on the document and gave the “account number” to the representative. Thinking it was a scam, the consumer refused to give her name and the representative hung up on her.

The Pierce County resident:

- Supposedly owed payment for parking in a private lot, but the lot and its location were not identified in the document.
- On the day in January when she was said to have been illegally parked in a lot, she was actually “up north” at a relative’s home.
- When the resident called the number listed on the document, the recording indicated that the business was involved in “law enforcement collections.”

Both state and federal laws prohibit solicitations disguised as bills and sales representations that are deceptive, untrue or misleading. If you are a victim of fraud, contact DATCP's Consumer Information Hotline at 1-800-422-7128 or file a complaint online on the DATCP website: <http://datcp.wi.gov>.

Caving in Wisconsin

You may know Al Schema enjoys serving on the Manitowoc City Council, but do you know he also loves exploring caves? The good news for Al is that he doesn't need to travel very far to find a one. Neither do you.

Ledge View Nature Center has three caves open to the general public from the end of May to the first weekend in November. For more information click [here](#).

[Cherney Maribel Caves County Park](#) offers many caves and crevices that are open and accessible by a series of trails when the park is officially open. On May 19th from 8am-3pm you can join members of the Wisconsin Speleological Society for free public tours of Maribel New Hope Cave - the first tours of the season. Cherney Maribel Caves County Park is just off I-43 half-way between Manitowoc and Green Bay.

Here's a link to [Wisconsin Speleological Society](#) where you can learn about additional caving opportunities throughout the state.

Al is making a push to put Wisconsin caving on the map and hopes you will visit a Wisconsin cave soon. He is also working with other cavers to to make caves accessible. Kudos to Al and his friends for that effort!

Here's a new You Tube Channel Al has created for caving in the state: <http://www.youtube.com/user/WisconsinCaves>.

Thanks for Visiting Your State Capitol

This week I had the pleasure of meeting with Lee Engelbrecht, Director of the Wisconsin Towns Association.



Lee Engelbrecht and Rep. Paul Tittl at the Capitol

Find Missing Money

Each year, the Office of the State Treasurer returns millions of dollars of unclaimed property to the rightful heirs and owners. This year is off to another good start with \$12,284,094 being returned so far.

Perhaps you will be the next person to receive a payment! To find out whether you are entitled to missing money, click here:



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