



State Representative Dan LeMahieu Presents

THE LEMAHIEU REPORT

News & Notes from the 59th Assembly District

TIME TO VOTE ON THE BUDGET

Much has been said and written about the 2009-2011 state budget. This week the legislature will finally start to debate that budget in the Assembly and Senate. Today the Assembly Republican caucus will be briefed on the final changes made by the Legislative Joint Finance Committee during the early morning hours of May 29th.

While some of the details still aren't clear, the direction this budget takes the State of Wisconsin is very clear: we are heading into a taxing and spending abyss. This is a budget that increases spending and borrowing, creates new programs and expands existing programs, raises taxes and fees and contains dozens of policy items that should not be passed, but at the very least be debated as separate pieces of legislation.

Many of these issues have been discussed in previous newsletters, so I will only address four in this newsletter. These are the issues I have received the most phone calls, e-mails and letters on.

First off, joint and several liability and auto insurance minimums. The joint and several liability language has been "tweaked" a little, but still is the worst language in the country. The trial lawyers are swimming like hungry sharks waiting for this to be passed. Whether at 1% or 20%, this will do nothing but annihilate drivers and business in Wisconsin. The auto insurance minimums will force some individuals to drop auto insurance all together. Democrats claim to be for the "little guy" however these increases will do nothing but hurt the lower to middle income drivers who are already trying to scrape by in a down economy with gas prices on the rise. Why punish the "little guy" at this time? Both items will be a boon for trial

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lawyers and will be a huge cost increase to individuals and businesses.

Secondly, benefits for illegal aliens. The budget would offer in-state tuition breaks to illegals to attend our UW colleges and technical schools. It would also allow illegals to obtain a driver's card. I don't know how anybody can justify these changes. This is so ridiculous I don't even know how to debate the issue.

Third, benefits for domestic partners. I have never supported benefits for same sex partners and I don't support offering benefits to opposite sex couples living together either. This expansion is doubly troubling given the tough economic times we find ourselves in right now. We certainly can't afford to expand employee benefits to the levels the budget proposes.

Fourth, prevailing wages. The original budget changed the prevailing wage rule to kick in at \$2,000 instead of \$223,000 for local government projects. Joint Finance changed that to \$25,000. This would still increase the cost of local government. Fewer jobs would take place at a higher cost. This, along with hundreds of other policy items in the budget, will kill jobs.

I would like to thank you, the members of the 59th Assembly district for diligently contacting my office over the past weeks on these issues. Although I have always agreed with you in opposing each and every one of these provisions that will do nothing but make Wisconsin more of a unfriendly place to raise a family, bring your business and earn a living, it is important we stay interactive.

I, along with the Republican caucus will have 75 – 100 amendments to the state budget to remove this and all policy and tax increases from this horrible budget. In order to pass any of these amendments we will need some Democrats to agree. The vast majority, if not all, of our amendments will fail. **Because most of the tax and spending increases and most of the policy will remain in the budget I will vote NO when we vote on final passage later this week.**

WISCONSIN EYE

If you would like to follow live what is happening on the

budget on Thursday go on your computer and Google [Wisconsin Eye](#). Their home page will show you how to see a live feed of the floor debate. It is similar to c-span type of coverage.

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