



With the start of the two-week regular voting session today, there have been a number of last-minute proposals introduced that could compromise the integrity of Wisconsin's electoral process. Assembly Bill 895 and Assembly Bill 892 are on the fast-track to make substantial changes to our election laws. So with little time for an adequate public review of the details, many constituents have contacted me questioning the need to rush these proposals through the legislative process.

I strongly oppose Assembly Bill 895 or Assembly Bill 892 and I remain concerned about opening new avenues for fraud and abuse in our voting system. The notion of having a legitimate vote cancelled out by a fraudulent vote is a practice I am working to prevent. In December, I introduced Assembly Bill 630, relating to the enforcement of the citizenship qualification for voting in elections in Wisconsin. To date, the Committee on Elections and Campaign Reform has taken no action on this issue. In addition, efforts to require a photo identification to vote that I have long supported have been blocked.

Possible session days left in 2010: April 15, April 20, April 21, and April 22.

Assembly Bill 895 (The "Motor Voter" Bill):

Assembly Bill 895, known as the "motor voter" bill, is a 72-page "reform" of current Wisconsin election law that was introduced on March 24, 2010 and has already been approved by the Elections and Campaign Reform Committee and the Joint Finance Committee. The following are a few of the changes this legislation would make: The bill contains a provision to automatically register voters when they apply for a drivers license or state identification card, regardless of their

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intent to vote or actual eligibility to vote. Currently, voters in Wisconsin go through a simple process to register themselves and can even register on election day without showing a photo ID. This legislation gets state government involved in the voter registration process, namely the Department of Transportation. Once a voter's name and information are in the system, it could be shared with other state government databases. The bill also greatly increases the number of locations where voters can cast absentee ballots, creating confusion and the potential for someone to cast multiple ballots. Voting on this legislation in the next week without having time for a proper analysis and debate is simply bad public policy.

Assembly Bill 892 (Electronic Voter Registration):

Assembly Bill 892 was introduced on March 24, 2010 and would allow for electronic voter registration through a website maintained by the Government Accountability Board (GAB). As I mentioned above, the process of registering to vote in person is quite simple. Involving an electronic database to register voters opens the door for potential manipulation and fraud. I have a number of concerns about who would have access to this sensitive data, how it would be protected, and matching this data to those voting at the polls on election day. Again, voting on this legislation in the next week without having time for a proper analysis and debate is simply bad public policy.

Children and Families Legislation

There are a number of bills relating to strengthening Wisconsin families that have a good chance of being approved by the Legislature this session. As the ranking member on the Assembly Children and Families Committee and a co-chair of the Special Committee on Strengthening Wisconsin Families, I have focused my efforts on ways to enhance and promote the idea of the strong Wisconsin family. Building strong family relationships and ensuring the health and safety of our children are goals that we should all be working to accomplish. Here are a few pieces of legislation that highlight these ideas:

Assembly Bill 823 (Training for foster parents) - This legislation was recommended by the Joint Legislative Council's Special Committee on Strengthening Wisconsin Families and will enhance the relationship and understanding

between foster parents and foster children in Wisconsin.

Assembly Bill 824 (Expectations for foster children and parents) - This legislation seeks to better the understanding of what a foster child and parent should be able to expect from the child welfare system, with the goal of improving outcomes and the experience of those in foster care.

Assembly Bill 780 (Child welfare provider rate implementation) - This legislation creates a performance-based contracting system for group homes, residential care centers, and child welfare agencies that links reimbursement to quality of service and measurable outcomes.

Honoring Walter J. “Butch” Ireland (Assembly Joint Resolution 120)

Today, I, along with the entire Wisconsin State Assembly, honored the life and public service of Walter J. “Butch” Ireland by adopting Assembly Joint Resolution 120. Mr. Ireland honorably served in the State Assembly from 1958 to 1960 and deeply cared about his community and his fellow citizens. He will always be remembered as a hardworking individual who got the job done with good nature and a smile. State Senator Joe Leibham was the lead author of this resolution in the Wisconsin State Senate.