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Dear neighbor,

It has been an honor serving you in my first term as the State Representative for the 45th Assembly District. For over a year, I've been busy representing you at the State Capitol, while attending as many meetings and events as possible around the district to hear your thoughts and truly be your voice in Madison.

Over the past session, I've served on 8 committees, took a leading role on 21 bills, co-authored hundreds, and cast over 400 votes. I've reached across the aisle to work and develop friendships with Republican colleagues, and signed on to 198 bipartisan bills. I was also chosen to serve as co-chair of the Assembly Democratic Freshman Caucus.

I've worked hard to move our state forward on many issues that matter to the residents of the 45th District and the entire state of Wisconsin. I've fought for clean and open government, strong public schools, and a thriving middle class. I've worked to protect our environment, restore local control to our towns, villages, cities, and school boards, and ensure equality for all residents.

This newsletter includes updates on the 2015-16 legislative session and legislation I've authored, an overview of my district activities, and ways to contact me to share your thoughts.

Thank you again for giving me the opportunity and honor to represent you.

Sincerely,
Mark Spreitzer



2015-16 Committee Assignments

My eight committee assignments reflect many of the issues that matter to the 45th District:

- ▶ Jobs & the Economy
- ▶ Workforce Development
- ▶ Task Force on Youth Workforce Readiness
- ▶ Transportation Projects Commission
- ▶ Natural Resources & Sporting Heritage
- ▶ Public Benefit Reform
- ▶ Mining & Rural Development
- ▶ Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules

Strengthening the Middle Class

Providing a living wage — I strongly support raising Wisconsin's minimum wage to at least \$10.10 per hour so hard-working people can support themselves and their families. **(AB 12)**

Providing help for families — I co-authored legislation to increase the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Homestead Tax Credit, and to create a self-funded FMLA insurance program to help prevent income losses when people take time to care for themselves or their family members. I also supported increasing payments to child care providers in the Wisconsin Shares program to ensure quality, affordable child care for all. These proposals will help working families and seniors keep more of their money and ensure that having a family doesn't break the bank. **(AB 84, AB 85, AB 516, AB 607)**

Retirement security for all — I co-authored the Private Retirement Security Act, which would give private-sector workers without an employer-sponsored retirement plan the chance to save for retirement. **(AB 70)**

Expanding BadgerCare and saving money — I strongly support accepting federal funding, money that you've already paid, to expand BadgerCare. By doing so, we can increase healthcare access for people living just above poverty while saving hundreds of millions of dollars to invest in our schools and other priorities.



Support for critical industries — I authored legislation to provide student loan assistance to encourage college graduates to work in industries critical to Wisconsin's success, that pay a living wage, and will have a need for more workers in the coming years. **(AB 661)**

Strong Public Schools and Higher Education



Rep. Spreitzer talking with students at Juda High School



Rep. Spreitzer presenting a flag to Fruzen Intermediate School

Opposed K-12 Cuts and Voucher Expansion — The 2015-17 state budget included a massive expansion of the statewide voucher program, draining nearly \$1 billion out of our public schools over the next decade. I opposed this expansion, voted against the state budget, and instead voted to increase funding for public schools. **(2015 Act 55)**

Opposed UW System Cuts — The state budget cut \$250 million from our University of Wisconsin system, threatening the quality of schools from UW-Madison to UW-Rock County. This cut also means a loss of staff at UW-Extension offices in Rock and Green counties. I strongly opposed this cut and fought to restore this funding. **(2015 Act 55)**

Fair Funding for Our Schools — As I promised when I ran to be your representative, I supported the Fair Funding for Our Schools plan and co-authored legislation to implement it. This plan would increase funding for rural and high-need urban districts, providing every child a chance to succeed. **(AB 482)**

Higher Ed, Lower Debt — Student loan debt is a growing problem that affects young people starting out, adults with college-aged children of their own, and even senior citizens. I co-authored a bill to allow many of the 800,000+ Wisconsinites with student debt to refinance their loans at lower interest rates and reduce their monthly payments. I also supported increased financial aid to help students take on less debt in the first place. **(AB 272)**

Clean, Open Government

Nonpartisan redistricting reform — I authored a bill to create a non-partisan redistricting process for Wisconsin, similar to what Iowa has done for decades. This plan will end partisan gerrymandering and make sure that voters choose their representatives, and not the other way around. **(AB 328)**

Clean elections & ethical representatives — I strongly opposed dismantling our non-partisan government watchdog, the Government Accountability Board, and gutting our campaign finance laws. However, Republicans fired the retired judges currently serving on the GAB, created new ethics and elections commissions made up of partisan political appointees, and allowed for more unregulated and undisclosed political spending, including by corporations. I worked with Democratic colleagues and clean government advocates to propose an alternative that would increase disclosure of campaign donations. **(Act 118, Act 117, and AB 605)**

Open records — When the majority party tried to gut open records laws in the state budget during the middle of the night, I helped get the word out and joined you in fighting back. Thankfully, we succeeded and preserved your right to know what your elected officials are doing. **(Budget Motion #999)**

Voter access — I strongly believe in everyone's right to vote, which is why I've co-authored many measures to make voting easier, including online and automatic voter registration, and protecting the right to vote in our state constitution. I also fought against the elimination of Special Registration Deputies, who help people register to vote. **(AB 288, AB 316, AB 379, AB 805, AJR 38, and Act 261)**



Ending late-night budgets and the end-of-session rush — At the end of the legislative session, bills fly through the process so quickly that legislators don't have time to understand them and ask questions, and the public doesn't have time to follow along and express opinions. I authored a bill to limit this practice and make sure that both legislators and the public have time to fully understand proposed legislation. I also co-authored a measure requiring debate on the state budget to occur during the light of day, and not the middle of the night. **(AB 965, AR 30)**

Other Things I'm Working On

Recruiting and retaining the next generation of family farmers — I authored legislation to create a student loan reimbursement program for new farmers. Wisconsin's farmers are aging, but there is growing interest in agriculture from young people of both urban and rural backgrounds. The New Farmer Student Loan Assistance Program will remove one of the barriers that keeps young people from farming. **(AB 913)**

Clean environment and public access to natural resources — I was a lead author of bills to create a Wisconsin Renewable Energy Development Authority, eliminate a requirement that the DNR sell-off public land, and require that state agencies consider public health and the environment when creating regulations. I also supported protecting groundwater, lakes, and streams, restoring town and county shoreland zoning authority, and increasing hunting and fishing opportunities. **(AB 66, Act 41, AB 499, and AB 933)**

Restoring local control and funding — I authored bipartisan legislation to restore the authority of cities like Beloit to have residency requirements for their managers. I strongly opposed bills that restrict funding for schools and municipalities or take away authority from local elected officials who know best in their communities. **(AB 262)**

Bringing Family Care to Rock County — Working across the aisle with all my fellow Rock County legislators, I co-authored legislation to bring Family Care to Rock County in 2016. This bill was signed into law by Governor Walker and will ensure that adults and seniors with disabilities will receive the care they need and deserve. **(Act 127)**

Sustainable Funding for 21st Century Infrastructure — I have pushed for a long-term, sustainable funding solution to meet our transportation needs, including maintaining local roads, supporting public transit, and widening I-39/90. I supported bills to increase funding for broadband expansion grants by \$20 million, make funding available sooner, and allow schools and libraries to apply for these grants. **(AB 63 and AB 647)**



Rep. Spreitzer at Family Care bill signing

Out and About in the 45th

The most important and most rewarding part of being your state representative is traveling around the 45th District and meeting people from all walks of life. This past year, I've held listening sessions in Albany, Beloit, Brodhead, Evansville, and Orfordville.

I've toured schools in Beloit, Evansville, Orfordville, Albany, and Juda, met with teachers and school board members, talked to high schoolers, and read to 2nd graders. I've attended community events like the Pearl Island Gala in Brodhead, the Evansville Energy Fair, Albany's Yesteryear Parade, and the Beloit Farmers Market. I've met constituents at cafes and coffee shops, and been welcomed into their homes. I've toured farms and businesses, sat in on town and village board meetings, and attended many community group meetings across the district.

A small sampling of other events I've attended includes:

- Beloit NAACP Banquet
- Brodhead Veterans Day ceremony
- "The Heat is On" Chili Cook-off in Evansville
- Rock and Green County Fairs and Dairy Breakfasts
- Pasture Walk at Green Fire Farm near Monticello
- Tour of Orfordville wastewater treatment plant
- School presentation in Juda on texting while driving
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day commemorations in Beloit
- Evansville Chamber of Commerce lunch

Please let me know if you would like to meet with me or if there is a meeting or event I should attend in your community! I would be honored to come listen to your thoughts and provide you with an update on what's going on in Madison.



Rep. Spreitzer with the Strikeforce band at the Community Action Martin Luther King Jr. Day commemoration in Beloit

I Want Your Feedback

I always love to hear from constituents. Please reach out, in whatever way is easiest for you, to share your thoughts on issues or pending legislation, to ask for help with benefits or a state agency, or to invite me to your next meeting or event. I'm always happy to talk by phone, answer a letter, write an email, or meet in person - in your community or at my Capitol office.

I also invite you to take my spring survey and tell me what you think on the important issues facing our area. Please visit www.repspreitzer.com to take my survey. If you don't have internet access, always feel free to call or write to share your thoughts.

Finally, I wanted to make you aware of many resources available to you through my office. If you would like a copy of the 2015-16 Wisconsin Blue Book or a state highway map, please let me know. I also have materials for school groups. If you're visiting the Capitol, please let me know and I will do my best to see you on your visit and take a picture with you.



Rep. Spreitzer with Beloit City Manager Lori Curtis Luther during mobile office hours on the bus



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