



STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**ROBERT BROOKS**



60<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

May 13, 2015

## A Note from Rep. Brooks

Since last our last e-update, my staff and I have been working tirelessly to review and amend Governor Scott Walker's 2015-2017 biennial budget. Thank you to everyone who contacted my office regarding the budget, attended my in-district budget listening sessions and filled out my Spring Survey, both online and in-person. I very much appreciate your thoughtful suggestions and feedback.

There has been a great deal of discussion regarding Governor Walker's 2015-2017 biennial budget proposal, especially as it relates to K-12 education, the University of Wisconsin System, IRIS, SeniorCare and FamilyCare.

I have met with each of the local school district superintendents, the School Board Association and Association of School Administrators, in recent weeks, to discuss the impact that Governor Walker's proposed cuts to the K-12 system would have on public education. **Restoring funding to our first-rate public school system is a top budget priority.**

As for the UW System, I had the opportunity to converse with countless chancellors, Ray Cross, President of the University of Wisconsin System, and students from the University of Wisconsin-Madison Chemistry Department. Akin to K-12, I am an ardent proponent of the UW System and intend to do everything I can to minimize the impact of any cuts to the system as a result of the budgetary process.

Our office has received hundreds of phone calls, emails and letters with regards to Governor Walker's proposal to reduce funding for IRIS, SeniorCare and FamilyCare. I submitted budget motions to Representative John Nygren, co-chairman of the Joint Finance Committee, asking that he and members of the legislature keep these programs intact and take further time to study Governor Walker's various proposals. As a result, the Joint Finance Committee issued a press release on May 14, 2015, rejecting a number of the proposed reforms. We will now preserve all of the above programs while pursuing limited reforms and seeking input from key stakeholders.

Thank you to those who have taken my 2015 spring survey online and sent hard copies to my office. My staff and I are working diligently to input the results of these surveys into our database, so as to better understand which issues are of greatest importance to voters in our district. The survey, if you have yet to complete it, is available on my website: <http://www.reprobertbrooks.com>. I look forward to reading your responses.

I appreciate your feedback on the budget and very much looking forward to hearing your concerns in the months ahead.

Have a great week.



**Delivering my maiden speech on the floor of the Wisconsin State Assembly.**

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## **This week in Madison**

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This week, my first piece of legislation, Assembly Bill (AB 177), designed to promote healthy eating, bolster nutrition and develop healthier lifestyles, was passed by the legislature, 60-35. Under this bill, the Department of Health Services must require that not less than sixty-seven percent of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits used by a recipient in a month be used to purchase nutritious food.

AB 177 is a common-sense bill that simply requires DHS to apply for a federal waiver to better align Wisconsin's FoodShare program with its intended goal: providing supplemental nutritional assistance to those who need it most. The amended bill, passed by the legislature this week, expands the Women, Infant and Children (WIC) list with no prohibitions on packaging or brand; includes, without restrictions, beef, poultry, pork and fish; all fresh produce; all potatoes, regardless of variety; cranberry products; and all dairy products. I worked with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to expand the list of allowable foods under the bill's two-thirds provision, so as to afford consumers with additional options and varieties.

This bill now goes before the Wisconsin State Senate for consideration. Senator Duey Stroebel is my senate lead on this legislation.

In addition to AB 177, I joined my colleagues, Democrat and Republican, in voting to increase the speed limit on Wisconsin four-lane roads that contain entrance and exit ramps. According to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, signage denoting the speed limit change will be posted on "freeway portions of the interstate system as well as portions of US Highway 51, US Highway 53 and US Highway 41, by this summer."

This week, the Wisconsin State Assembly also passed Assembly Bills 191 and 192, dealing with drug testing of enrollees in certain job training programs and those receiving unemployment insurance benefits. The purpose of these bills was straightforward: to continue the fight towards making Wisconsin's workforce drug free; providing drug treatment to those with substance abuse issues; and promoting job readiness.

I had the opportunity, this week, to publish an [editorial](#) in the *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*, outlining my Better Bottom Line Initiative, a pay-for-performance program that gives incentives to school districts that provide work experiences to students with disabilities. As more information regarding this initiative becomes available, I will keep you abreast.

I had the opportunity to meet with students from the University of Wisconsin Chemistry Department (I toured their facility in February), to discuss some of the groundbreaking research they are conducting on a myriad of subjects. My colleagues and I, Democrats and Republicans alike, welcomed Nigel Hayes and Port Washington native, Josh Gasser, UW-Madison Men's basketball stars, to the Wisconsin State Capitol. I want to extend a hearty congratulations to Coach Ryan and members of the UW Men's basketball team for their outstanding scholastic and athletic accomplishments.



**At a press conference discussing AB 177, my healthy foods bill.**



**My staff and I had the opportunity to meet with students from the UW-Madison Chemistry Department.**



**Meeting with Port Washington native and Wisconsin Men's basketball star, Josh Gasser, at the Wisconsin State Capitol.**

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## **This week in the 60th District**

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Akin to previous weeks, I had the opportunity to converse with innumerable constituents in the district, attend events and provide budget updates to civic groups and local government bodies. Also, I had the privilege of joining newly-inaugurated State Senator, Duey Stroebel at a budget listening session in Cedarburg. Thank you to all who attended and for your insightful feedback regarding the ways in which we can improve upon Governor Walker's 2015-2017 biennial budget proposal.

I had the opportunity to tour the Operating Engineers training facility in Coloma, Wisconsin. It was truly an honor to take part in this event and tour their state-of-the-art facility.

This Monday, May 18, 2015, I have the honor of presenting Assembly citations to students graduating from the Youth Apprenticeship program. Being able to present these hard-working, industrious students with citations honoring their achievements is poised to be an exhilarating experience.



**Participating in an in-district listening session at the Cedarburg library with Senator Duey Stroebel.**



**Delivering a budget address to members of the Washington County Republican Women.**

Have a great week,

As always, if you have any comments or thoughts regarding the subject of this E-update, please feel free to contact me.

If you would like to be removed from future mailings, email me and ask to unsubscribe.

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