



# NANCY VANDERMEER

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 70<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

April 28, 2015

## Building a Stronger State Budget

By this point, you've likely heard something that has peaked your interest or caught your attention about Governor Walker's proposed budget for the state for the next two years. Maybe you've read something online or found yourself talking about a proposed change with a friend or neighbor. With the governor's proposal now before the legislature for review and modification, I want to take this opportunity to share with you a few ways I'm fighting to make this budget the best it can be for our communities.

I would like to thank everyone who came to one of the several listening sessions that I have hosted across the district during the past several weeks. These sessions have been invaluable to not only solicit feedback from constituents, but also to hear first-hand what sort of affects the proposed budget would have on our communities. In fact, using your feedback in conjunction with the calls and emails received at my office, I'm happy to report several positive changes that have been made to this budget as a result of your involvement.

One of the issues many of you brought to my attention was the proposed changes to SeniorCare – a prescription discount program for Wisconsin's senior citizens. After hearing your concerns, I sent a letter to the co-chair of the legislature's Joint Finance Committee reaffirming my support for this popular program and requesting that it be preserved in our next budget. In sharing many of your personal stories and concerns with the proposal, I'm pleased to share that the budget-writing committee has signaled their intent to save SeniorCare.

Many of you also expressed your doubt with the Governor's plan to change the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Board and Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Board into a pair of advisory boards. Again by sharing your concerns with members of the finance committee, we were able to reverse the governor's proposal and preserve the ability of these citizen boards to be an active voice in government. Another positive change that the committee recently announced was the removal of a provision that would have shifted property assessment duties from our towns and villages to counties.

If you haven't already, I would encourage you take a few moments to visit [www.RepVanderMeer.com](http://www.RepVanderMeer.com) and complete a brief survey on the state budget. As you can already see, constituent feedback is critical in helping me identify your priorities as we move forward.

Although the legislature's review of the budget is far from complete, I'm optimistic that over the course of the next several weeks my colleagues and I will make several additional changes to our state's financial plan. Finding ways to refine and reform state government, investing in our K-12 schools and holding the line on taxes will continue to be my priorities as we move to complete this process by early summer.

*Nancy VanderMeer represents the 70<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin State Assembly District, which includes portions of Monroe, Jackson, Portage and Wood counties.*