



End of Session Column  
By Steve Doyle

Do you remember when you had senioritis in high school? During that last semester of classes when all you could think about was how soon it would all be over so you could spend the summer hanging out with your friends? Your classes may have continued, but you were completely over studying and working on assignments. You were in such a rush to get out that you didn't care what else happened.

Well it seems the Wisconsin Legislature has a bad case of senioritis. Our leaders cut short our remaining days of session and crammed countless pieces of legislation into what few days we had left. Things that should have had the proper time for debate and discussion were rushed through in the blink of an eye. Procedures got sloppy. And like any student who suddenly realizes that they are out of time, we pulled an all-nighter with a marathon session lasting until 5 am.

Unfortunately, it seems that because a few members in the Assembly leadership were already "checked out" and eager to hit the campaign trail, many of us were forced to watch as our Legislative session ended abruptly and extremely divisively.

But just like the high school senior ready for summer, there is still so much work to be done before graduation. There are so many really good bills that were still waiting at various stages of the Legislative process, waiting for public hearings, committee action, votes on the floor of the Senate and the Assembly. Many of these bills would create jobs and help improve our economy. Others would pave the way for the rebuilding of the middle class like helping our college students refinance their student loans at a lower rate. Still more proposals were simply left on the table because time ran out.

We are at a turning point in Wisconsin. Our economy is changing and our workforce is adapting to meet that new demand. At a time when workers around the state are being asked to tighten their belts and put in some overtime to make ends meet, the Wisconsin State Legislature should not be taking a summer vacation. There is just too much at stake to give up now.

With even a few more days of session, the Assembly could really do great things. We could pass meaningful school accountability to promote transparency in taxpayer funded voucher schools. We could pass legislation to give all counties the same ability to protect their natural resources from frac sand mining and groundwater contamination. We could take up jobs bills like the Marketing Manufacturing and Keeping Employees (MMAKE) bill package, designed to help small manufacturers with advertising, outreach and marketing plans, which passed the Assembly but not the Senate. And we could help create jobs.



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In spite of all this, I am determined to keep working. As a student, I was never very good at taking vacation. I will be using this recess as an opportunity to work on new and innovative proposals that will be ready when the next session begins. I will continue to reach across the aisle to find colleagues who share my passion for the issues and to work with them to bring bipartisan legislation forward, just like I did for my recently passed WAT grant bill. This bipartisan bill will create jobs without spending any additional tax dollars. I won't let my colleagues' senioritis keep me from doing my job of representing the people of the 94<sup>th</sup>.