

# Representative Robert Turner Reports



Rep. Turner joins the Racine County delegation at the start of Racine County Day, 2006.

## Racine County Day

Nearly 100 Racine County residents visited the Capitol recently for the 2nd Annual Racine County Day. These unofficial volunteer ambassadors called on the state's legislators to "talk up" Racine and highlight issues of importance for the County.

Wisconsin legislators heard what makes Racine County unique and were thanked for their support of various issues ranging from funding the City's Gang Diversion Program to supporting Caledonia's incorporation.

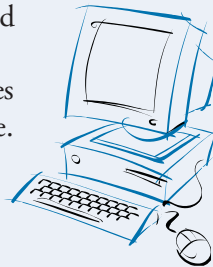
## Free Publications

The State of Wisconsin offers free informational and resource materials that are available in limited supply. Contact my office to receive a State of Wisconsin Blue Book or a Wisconsin State Highway map. Please note that distribution is limited.



## Updated Website

Please check out my recently updated website. You will find information about government issues and services that are available through my office. You will also discover helpful links to other resource materials.



Log on to the website at:  
<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/assembly/asm61/news>

## Helpful Contact Information

<b>BadgerCare</b>	<b>1-800-362-3002</b>
<b>Consumer Protection</b>	<b>1-800-422-7128</b>
<b>Insurance complaints</b>	<b>1-800-236-8517</b>
<b>Low Income Housing Loans (WHEDA)</b>	<b>1-800-334-6873</b>
<b>SeniorCare</b>	<b>1-800-657-2038</b>
<b>Sex Offenders Citizen Access Website</b>	<b><a href="http://WIDOCOffenders.org">http://WIDOCOffenders.org</a></b>
<b>Veterans Loans &amp; Grants</b>	<b>1-800-947-8387</b>



# Robert Turner

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
TO THE 61ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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## Robert Turner

Assembly Democratic Caucus Chair

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
TO THE 61ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Dear Friends,

As the State Legislature wraps up its 2005-2006 session, I want to take this opportunity to highlight some of the many accomplishments that have taken place since we began the session in January of 2005.

The legislature passed a biennial budget this past year that held the line on property taxes, yet at the same time protected schools, giving them a 3% increase from the state for the next two years. Shared revenue was fully funded to help maintain local services at their current level.

The minimum wage was increased from \$5.15 an hour to \$5.70, and will increase to \$6.50 per hour on June 1, 2006. This increase was long overdue, since the minimum wage had not been raised since 1997. The repeal of the automatic gas tax and providing extra funding for home heating assistance will give our state's citizens some needed relief from soaring energy costs.

Inside this newsletter, you will find additional information regarding the progress which has been made during this legislative session.

As always, it is an honor and privilege to serve as your State Representative. I appreciate the trust that you have placed in me, and I welcome your input on state issues. Please continue to contact me with any concerns or comments you have on state policies or legislation.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Turner  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
61st ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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## 2005 – 2006 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

- Chair, Assembly Democratic Caucus
- Assembly Organization
- Criminal Justice and Homeland Security
- Judiciary
- Rules
- Veterans Affairs

## HOW TO CONTACT ME

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Rep. Turner welcomes the English as a Second Language class from Gateway Technical College to the State Capitol.

## State Capitol Tours

Wisconsin's State Capitol is a beautiful building of historical significance, dating back to the early 1900's. Construction of the West wing began in 1906, and the legislature's first meeting in the building was in 1909. Recent, major renovations were completed in 2001.

The Capitol is open daily from 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. and closes at 4 p.m. on weekends and holidays. Tours are free of charge. Call (608) 266-0382, Monday through Friday to make reservations for groups of 10 or more.

I hope you will let me know when you plan to visit, and stop by my office to say hello.

## 2005-07 State Budget at a Glance

The 2005-2007 budget is a balanced budget that embodies the values of the people of this great state: improving education, lowering taxes, preserving health care for low income families and the elderly, creating jobs, and protecting property taxpayers.

### Tax Cuts

In the 2005-07 budget, the following tax cuts will reduce the tax burden by more than \$325 million:

- Exempting seniors from taxes on Social Security benefits
- Creating a tax deduction for health insurance
- Helping families pay for college
- Reducing the gas tax
- Reducing taxes on military families and veterans

### Property Tax Freeze

In recent years, property tax bills have gone up by an average of almost \$120 a year. Under the budget's property tax freeze, the average homeowner's bill did not go up at all this year, and will actually go down \$5 next year.

### Education Protected

This budget will allow schools a modest 3 percent increase. In fact, it is the same as they've been given for

the last decade, but for the next two years, that increase will be paid by the state, not local property taxpayers, so we can have a property tax freeze. Cuts to the UW System and financial aid of \$43 million were vetoed.

### Spending Cuts of over \$1 Billion by:

- Eliminating almost 4,000 positions over the past four years
- Selling 1000 state cars and seven state planes
- Eliminating 1,500 state cell phones
- Saving \$98 million by negotiating a better deal on a Medicaid contract
- Cutting state overhead by \$270 million

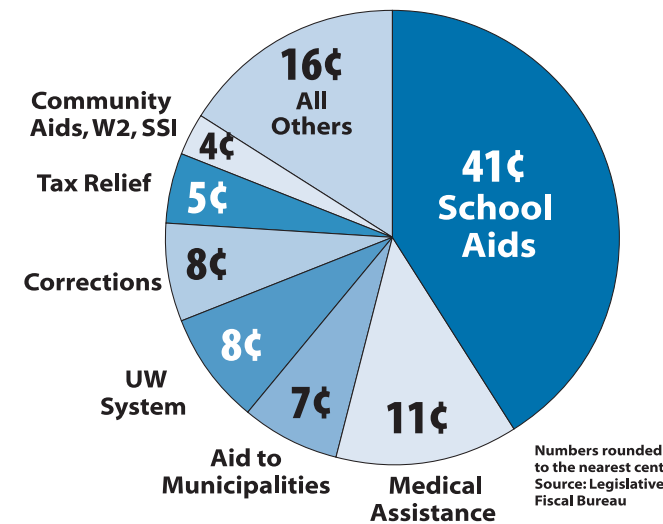
### Environment Protected

The Governor vetoed a plan to decimate the Stewardship Fund by forcing it to spend \$80 million to buy land that the state already owns and protects. A 25% reduction of the state's tipping fee, which would have made Wisconsin an even more attractive dumping ground for out-of-state trash haulers was deleted, and Wisconsin's Smart Growth Program was preserved, to ensure environmental-friendly planning and cooperation by all units of government.



Rep. Turner confers with colleagues at a Rules committee meeting.

## How a Tax Dollar is Spent in Wisconsin



## 2005 Bills Co-Sponsored by Representative Turner

- AB 565** Creates a homeowners' tax credit based upon fair market value up to \$60,000
- AB 392** Campaign finance reform
- AB 305** Compassionate care for rape victims
- AB 1034** Veterans tuition exemption at UW colleges and technical schools
- AB 802** Supplemental Medical Assistance payments to county and municipal nursing homes
- AB 784** Maximum term of imprisonment for certain child sex offenses
- AB 303** Repeal of the gasoline indexing tax
- AB 826** Prohibit leaving unattended children in vehicles (Asia Jones bill)
- SB 371** Prohibit mandatory overtime hours for health care workers
- AB 834** Action plan for affordable health care

## Funeral Dignity Protection Act

I authored this bill in response to well-publicized protests that have been held at military members' funerals in Wisconsin and across the country. The Funeral Dignity Protection Act (Senate Bill 525) requires protesters to keep 500 feet away from a funeral, wake, or memorial service, from one hour prior to the funeral until one hour after the funeral. The bill applies to all funerals in Wisconsin. Anyone violating the law could be charged with a misdemeanor of disorderly conduct and could face a fine up to \$1,000, or up to 90 days jail, or both. Governor Doyle signed this bill February 20, 2006.



Rep. Turner, cosponsor of 2005 Senate Bill 525, listens to Governor Doyle speak before signing the Funeral Dignity Protection Act.