



Rep. Kerkman and Rep. Molepske testify on a bill they co-authored during a committee hearing.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE



SAMANTHA Kerkman *Legislative Update*  
**KERKMAN**

SPRING 2010

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## REP. KERKMAN'S 2009-2011 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

- **Creating Jobs and Stimulating Economic Growth**
- **Controlling Excessive Government Spending**
- **Making Health Care more Affordable**
- **Investing in our Children's Education and Future**
- **Providing Tax Relief to Seniors, Families, and Small Businesses**
- **Protecting and Honoring our Heroic Veterans**

## New State Hotline for Government Fraud and Waste

A 24-hour toll free hotline has been set-up for the public to report incidents of fraud, waste and mismanagement in state government. Callers' identities will remain confidential, but people are encouraged to be as specific as possible with the information they provide.

You can access the hotline at:

**1-877-FRAUD-17**

—or—

**1-877-372-8317**

## Helpful Resources

### The New Samantha Kerkman Website

I encourage you to stop by my new website [www.legis.state.wi.us/assembly/asm66/news](http://www.legis.state.wi.us/assembly/asm66/news) to get valuable information about me and the goings-on in the Legislature.

### Capitol Insight

If you'd like to stay up-to-date on issues before the Legislature, you can sign up to get my regular e-update, the *Capitol Insight*. Just e-mail me at [Rep.Kerkman@legis.wi.gov](mailto:Rep.Kerkman@legis.wi.gov) and say you want the *Capitol Insight*.

### Informative Publications

My office in Madison is happy to help you in anyway we can. We offer a number of services and can provide you with a variety of informative publications. If you would like any of the following items, just e-mail me at [Rep.Kerkman@legis.wi.gov](mailto:Rep.Kerkman@legis.wi.gov) or call (888) 534-0066

- ✓ Wisconsin Summer Recreation Guide
- ✓ Wisconsin Official Travel Guide
- ✓ Wisconsin State Blue Book
- ✓ Wisconsin State Highway Map
- ✓ Arts and Craft Fair Directory

Please submit publication requests as soon as possible. Under state law, no materials may be sent after June 1st of an election year.

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State Representative

**Samantha J. Kerkman**

Dear Friends:

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as your state representative for the past ten years. Over the last decade, we as a state have overcome many challenges and must prepare for those that lie ahead, particularly given our economic climate. As your representative in the State Assembly, I will continue to work hard and in collaboration with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in identifying the best strategies that will help revitalize our state's economy and ensure a bright future for those who choose to live, work and raise a family here.

Many of you may be familiar with the now infamous Wisconsin Shares scandals uncovered by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel this past year. As I've discussed in a number of my e-newsletters, several participants in the program, including day care providers, essentially stole nearly \$20 million from the taxpayers in 2008 alone through providing false documents that were never reported by overwhelmed caseworkers.

We also passed the 2009-2011 State Budget this session, which included a number of difficult cuts to programs and services as a result of the current economic climate.

Despite the hard decisions my colleagues and I have had to make this session given the downturn in our state's economy, we've also made substantial progress in ensuring a brighter future for Wisconsin. We passed legislation this session to remove financial penalties imposed on conversions from Individual Retirement Accounts to Roth IRAs in Wisconsin. We introduced job creation legislation such as the C.O.R.E. Jobs Act and a bill that would provide tax benefits to small businesses with fewer than ten employees. I have also co-sponsored legislation that will provide tax benefits to graduates of Wisconsin's colleges and universities who choose to stay here and work, thus reversing our infamous "brain drain."

There is still much work to be done in getting Wisconsin back on the right economic track amid tremendous losses in jobs, businesses and revenue. But I believe that the good people of Wisconsin have the motivation and determination needed to work through these difficult times and emerge even stronger in the brighter future that lies ahead. I look forward to working with the residents of the 66th Assembly District and exchanging ideas as to how we can move Wisconsin forward. Thank you.

Sincerely,

**Samantha J. Kerkman**  
State Representative  
66th Assembly District

## KEEP IN TOUCH

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## SAM'S COMMITTEES IN THE STATE ASSEMBLY

- Joint Committee on Audit
- Ways & Means  
(Ranking Member)
- Judiciary & Ethics

**Serving Kenosha & Racine counties & a portion of Walworth County.**



# REPRESENTATIVE SAMANTHA KERKMAN

*Legislative Update*  
SPRING 2010

## LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

### Job Creation

Among the most important initiatives we must pursue in improving Wisconsin's economic climate is job creation. In doing so, we need to give our business community every incentive possible, such as tax benefits, to ensure they have the revenue needed to hire new employees and provide them with adequate salaries, wages, and benefits.

### Protecting Retirement Savings

This session, my colleagues and I passed, and Governor Doyle signed into law, legislation that eliminates penalties imposed on retirement account conversions. Until this legislation became law, Wisconsin was the only state in the country that imposed tax penalties on consumers who chose to convert their traditional Individual Retirement Accounts to Roth IRAs. Now, they will be able to convert \$100,000 from a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA without the burden of tax penalties.



*Rep. Kerkman and husband Chad pictured with state Supreme Court Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson.*

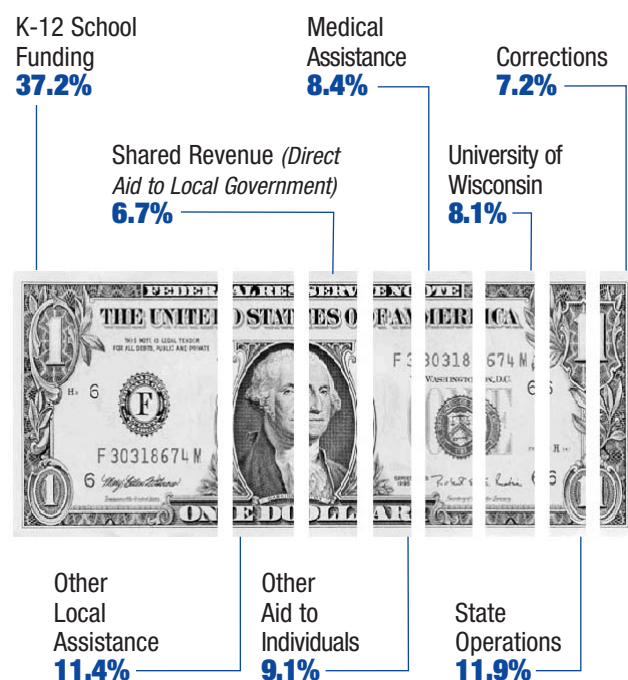
### Deterring Child Care Fraud

One of the most outrageous incidents of wasteful spending to come to light this past year was the fraud uncovered within the *Wisconsin Shares* program. My colleagues on the Joint Legislative Audit Committee and I worked with the Legislative Audit Bureau in conducting a year-long audit of the program. At the conclusion of the audit, we discovered that between \$16.7 and \$18.5 million in improper subsidies were paid to participants in 2008 alone, and nearly 500 providers had criminal records. The recipients of these improper payments included participants with no recorded wages, participants in possession of inadequate documentation of self-employment (such as "owning" their own daycare business), and ineligible participants in general.

In response to these troubling findings, several recommendations were made by the audit bureau and a number of bills were introduced to prevent future fraud of the program. Among the legislative measures I co-sponsored, one would prohibit anyone with drug-related convictions from becoming licensed child care providers. Another bill that I co-sponsored would require county supervisors who oversee *Wisconsin Shares* caseloads to report suspected drug activity to local law enforcement. We have a long way to go in reforming *Wisconsin Shares*, but I believe that with stronger regulations and tougher penalties, we will reduce the prevalence of fraud within the program and restore accountability while saving taxpayer dollars.

## 2009-2011 Budget Total Budget 27.6 Billion

Here is a breakdown of how each state tax dollar was spent in the last fiscal year.



## DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

### Expansion of RexCon

In November, the new 130,000 square-foot facility of RexCon opened in Burlington. Comprised of a number of "batch plants," the company mixes and provides concrete for the construction of highways and airport runways. RexCon also loans quality used equipment for construction projects to its customers. With construction season upon us, RexCon will certainly help contribute to the recovery and growth of our local economy through the services it provides to its customers and the jobs it will help create for area residents.

### New UW-Parkside Chancellor

Last fall, the University of Wisconsin-Parkside welcomed its new chancellor, Dr. Deborah Ford, to campus. Chancellor Ford bravely made the move to Wisconsin from Pensacola, Florida, where she served as Vice President for



*Rep. Kerkman and Rep. Barca pictured with UW-Parkside Chancellor Deborah Ford.*

Student Affairs at the University of West Florida since 2003. She had previously served in the same role as well as Dean of Students at Spalding University in Louisville, Kentucky. I firmly believe she is a proven leader with a wealth of experience in post-secondary education, and I am confident that she will do an exceptional job in serving UW-Parkside.

### Opening of Mattel Toy Store

In addition to RexCon, the 66th Assembly District also celebrated the grand opening of the Mattel Toy Store in Wilmot in early November. Open Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00am until 6:00pm, the store offers products made by Mattel, Matchbox, Tyco, Power Wheels and closeouts from previous lines and other discounted items.



*Rep. Kerkman at the grand opening of the Mattel Toy Store in Wilmot with Assistant Manager Jolene Dabmen and Regional Manager Jeff Toboyek.*



*Rep. Kerkman pictured with Sen. Wirsch and Boy Scout Troop 328 at the 100th Anniversary celebration of the Boy Scouts of America.*



*Rep. Kerkman and First Lady Jessica Doyle pictured at the Veterans' Day services held at the Trevor-Wilmot Consolidated Grade School.*

## Rep. Kerkman's E-Newsletter Updates

Periodically, I send an e-mail newsletter to area residents to update them on legislative activities or other items of interest.

If you would like to sign up to receive my "Capitol Insight" by e-mail, please contact my office at [Rep.Kerkman@legis.wi.gov](mailto:Rep.Kerkman@legis.wi.gov), and we'll add you to our list.