



# KARL VAN ROY

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

**For Immediate Release**  
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## **Van Roy's Views: Ethics, Elections, and Reform**

**MADISON** – All government is a work in progress. Every part of government can be improved, and each generation has an obligation to leave government better than they found it. That doesn't just mean better policy; it also means a better political system. One of our generation's challenges is to make sure our public officials adhere to high ethical standards both as office-holders and candidates. I am pleased to support several ethics and elections reforms this session that would make those standards law.

### **A Government Accountability Board**

More often than not, government must regulate itself (scary but true) when it comes to ethics and campaign finance, and the stronger and fairer the tools for regulating, the better. That is why I support Senate Bill 1, authored by lead campaign finance reform legislator Sen. Mike Ellis. This major ethics reform measure creates a nonpartisan Government Accountability Board and an Enforcement Division within the Board to investigate ethics, elections and lobbying violations. Having a central, nonpartisan organization to investigate these types of actions will help to ensure objective and effective analysis and fair enforcement of penalties for potential violations. The bill was crafted with input from both parties and has bipartisan support.

### **Elections Integrity Act**

Even when public officials experience a lapse in integrity, election law must remain steadfast. The Elections Integrity Act is modeled after the national Hatch Act, which bans federal employees from engaging in campaign activities while on the job. Similarly, the Elections Integrity Act prohibits state employees from campaigning on state time and requires them to participate in mandatory, ongoing training sessions on campaign and ethics laws. I support this measure because it helps to draw a clear line between campaign work and state work, providing much needed clarification in this area of statute.

### **Removing Campaign Workers from State Health Coverage**

To further clarify the line between campaign work and state work, I also support a measure to prohibit the paying of health insurance benefits for individuals who leave state service to work on campaigns.

### **Transparency in Fundraising Act**

Money will always find a way into politics, but you deserve at least to know where it's coming from. The Transparency in Fundraising Act requires candidates for state office to file additional campaign finance reports, particularly during the budget process.

### **Banning Budget Cycle Donations**

Finally, I support two measures that bar candidates from accepting donations during the budget process. This period is when state officials decide where and how your tax dollars will be spent, and it is only right to shield against influences that could potentially accompany campaign contributions.

We live in a world of increasing complexity, and that goes double for government and politics. Red tape, loop holes, stacks of complicated policy, lots of opinions and even more money. But doing the right thing should not be complicated. These policies give guidance to leaders and citizens and put into law the standards that are the right steps for right now.

No reform measure will fix every problem, and each reform will be followed by new ways people find to get around it. But that doesn't mean we stop trying. We are blessed to live in this country and in this state. That is why it is our duty to try to make government cleaner, more open, and more honest. That is why we must keep finding innovative ways to combat new manifestations of age-old problems. That is why government will always remain a work in progress.

For right now though, I'm just glad we're making a little progress of our own.

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