



90th Assembly District  
**REP. KARL VAN ROY**

**Legislative Update**

May 26, 2006

**The Week in Review**

With the end of May approaching, this Friday marks the last newsletter I am sending out. It has been a pleasure sharing the work of the legislature with you over the past few months. Thank you all for your responses and suggestions. I have truly enjoyed hearing your thoughts and look forward to hearing more from you in the future. I hope you will keep checking the [website](#) this summer and fall for updates. Have a safe and happy holiday weekend!

**Remembering Memorial Day**

Memorial Day weekend is a time for fun in the sun, getting together with friends and family, and of course, brats and beer. It is also a time for remembrance; along with celebration comes honoring those who have died for our country.

Originally, Memorial Day was called Decoration Day, as people throughout the country decorated the graves of fallen Civil War soldiers. Inspired by the efforts of several different towns to pay homage to their dead, the holiday was first officially declared by General John Logan in 1868. Honoring the dead of Union and Confederate troops alike, Memorial Day was born in a spirit of unity and reconciliation.

That spirit remains central to Memorial Day today. The day symbolizes our connection through the blood shed by those who fought to keep our nation free. Memorial Day is also a humble reminder that Americans should disregard disagreements when paying respect to those who preserve our right to disagree. It is the time of year to recall that even when our opinions diverge, we should all be united in gratitude.

Our soldiers today face challenges their predecessors never faced, but they meet those challenges with the same strength, courage, and hope with which all American veterans have served. They have been consistent, and we must also be consistent. When they stand against the opponents of freedom, we will stand to greet them when they return home. As they are steadfast in their service, we will be steadfast in our thanks.

This session, the legislature passed several bills to show our appreciation for veterans. From tuition assistance, to property tax relief, to Gulf War Illnesses Recognition Day, we have honored veterans with legislation. But even though these laws are important acts of gratitude, they may not mean as much to a veteran as would a sincere thank you from a fellow American.

This weekend take a moment to pay your respects to a lost soldier. Ask your friends and family about their experiences serving the country. And, of course, thank veterans and soldiers who are still with us for their service.

Ultimately, soldiers and veterans give us more than our freedom itself. They also impart the lessons that give freedom meaning. On Memorial Day we remember not only the people who lost their lives defending America, but also the lessons their actions teach us: that freedom isn't free, that duty is larger than self, and that sacrifice is the ultimate form of patriotism.

I wish you all a wonderful Memorial Day weekend. I hope you get to spend time with your loved ones. I hope the brats and beer are plentiful. I hope the weather is good! But most of all, I hope that each of us remembers that when we enjoy this weekend, or any other day, we do so because of the sacrifice of others. By living freely, we are exercising the liberty our veterans fought to protect. In this way, we have become living tributes to the sacrifices of our soldiers. We must continue to honor their sacrifice with our honor, our gratitude, and, above all, our remembrance.

## Teaching Abstinence

Teaching kids how to be responsible for themselves is one of the most important lessons they will ever learn. That is why I'm pleased to announce that SB 286 was signed into law this past week. The bill requires schools providing sexual education to provide information on abstinence as well.

Under current law, schools must offer instruction in marriage and parental responsibility if they also offer instruction in any of the following nine areas: human sexuality, reproduction, family planning, HIV/AIDS, prenatal development, childbirth, adoption, available prenatal and postnatal support, and male and female responsibility. Under the new law, schools teaching these subjects must also include information that presents abstinence as the preferred choice of sexual behavior for unmarried pupils and that emphasizes that abstinence is the best way to prevent pregnancy and STDs.

Contrary to what some people have been told, this measure is *not* an abstinence-only bill. Rather, it makes sure that students receive accurate, thorough information about sexual behavior, including abstinence. Now, students will have more information to help them make better choices and, hopefully, to lead better lives.

## Treating Mental Illness

Another proposal affecting young people was also signed into law this week. SB 226 allows parents to consent to mental health treatment for children age 14 to 17. Now all minors will be treated equally under the law when it comes to receiving treatment for mental illnesses.

The law updates mental health policy in Wisconsin by eliminating discrepancies between older children and younger children. While children 14 and older may have refused treatment previously, now their parents may consent to their getting help. The law will facilitate care for teenagers who may have refused treatment due to fear, serious impairment, aversion to social stigmas, or the belief that they do not need care.

Hopefully this, and other laws passed this session, will bring improvement to the lives of Wisconsinites throughout our great state. If you have a suggestion for a bill for next session, please do not hesitate to contact me!

To remove your name from my list, please [click here](#).

For questions or concerns on any state issues,  
please contact me toll free at 1-888-534-0090  
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