



Rep. Kerkman with Paul Fredericksen, member of the Korean War Veterans Association, at the Sunset Ridge Memorial Dedication

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

SAMANTHA Kerkman

Legislative Update

SPRING 2014

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More Jobs!

Southeastern Wisconsin has attracted several new businesses to the area; this means more jobs and a growing economy in our region. Kenall Manufacturing Company recently moved its headquarters to Kenosha, bringing 400 jobs with it. Several other businesses including EMCO Chemical Distributors, Hanna Cylinders and Meijer Inc. have also moved to the area. Shaping Wisconsin into a business friendly state is a chief task this session. Future developments, including the Amazon distribution center, will continue to combat unemployment. Further, I am a strong supporter of the Kenosha casino project and the 5,000 jobs it will bring with it. My hopes are that Governor Walker will approve of the project and keep more jobs coming to the region.



Rep. Kerkman pictured with Ty Lane, County Supervisor Kim Breunig, Assistant Scoutmaster and Battalion Chief Matthew Haerter, Ed Brandon (Three Harbors Council CEO), Ron Majors, and father Bob Lane at Ty's Court of Honor Ceremony

REP. KERKMAN'S 2013-2014 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

- **Creating Jobs and Stimulating Economic Growth**
- **Controlling Excessive Government Spending**
- **Mental Healthcare Reform**
- **Investing in our Children's Education and Future**
- **Providing Tax Relief through Tax Reform**
- **Protecting and Honoring our Heroic Veterans**

Helpful Resources

The Samantha Kerkman Website

I encourage you to stop by new website <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/assembly/asm61/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 and say you want the *Capitol Insight*.

Informative Publications

My office in Madison is happy to help you in any way 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 or call (888) 529-0061.

- ✓ 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 April 1st of an election year.

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State Representative
Samantha J. Kerkman

Dear Friends,

Serving as your representative in the State Assembly over the past fourteen years has been a great honor and privilege. Reflecting the views and voices of the 61st District to the Assembly is a role I take with utmost seriousness. I am proud to be a part of the positive changes we are seeing in Wisconsin today and look forward to continuing to move our state in the right direction.

During the previous biennium, our state was faced with the daunting task of balancing the budget, but the hard work has paid off and Wisconsin is reaping the benefits of responsible financial planning. Our reforms balanced the budget and allowed for the creation of a regular surplus. The 2013-2015 budget includes one of the largest tax cuts in state history, including a 1% cap on property tax increases. Beyond tax cuts, the budget allows for expansion of our education voucher program, \$300 million increase in public school funding, and increased investment in tourism. The fruits of budget reform mean more money back to Wisconsin residents allowing for our state's economy to continue growing.

A crucial component of a sound budget is transparency. As co-chair of the Joint Audit Committee, I have invested significant time in promoting transparency within state programs. Audits conducted by the nonpartisan Legislative Audit Bureau (LAB) create accountability and allow Wisconsin residents to know their money is being spent properly. For example, an audit of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) revealed awards were made to ineligible recipients and a lack of policies to govern proper implementation of WEDC programs. Following the release of the audit, my co-chair and I introduced Senate Bill 205 and Assembly Bill 228. These bills work to increase WEDC accountability in several ways, such as by setting term limits on the WEDC board, increasing the frequency of audits, and requiring transparent procurement procedures. An audit of five Wisconsin child placing agencies also revealed questionable expenditures. As a result, LAB recommended that the Department of Children and Families (DCF) improve its policies and oversight by requiring child placing agencies to provide full repayment or a thorough explanation of all questionable expenditures. I will continue to utilize necessary audits throughout this session, as they are vital in producing transparency and ensuring your tax dollars are being spent as intended.

As a member of the Children and Families committee I maintain a strong dedication to addressing the issues facing Wisconsin children and families today. A few of the issues I have been working on this session include: the intoxicated co-sleeping bill, prohibiting smoking in child care centers, and training standards/reporting of domestic abuse incidents. I have introduced these pieces of legislation as a means to improve the quality and safety of children and families throughout our community. I take great pride in working to make Wisconsin a place that families can feel safe to call home.

Though the work in Wisconsin is never finished, great strides have been made to practice fiscal responsibility, grow our economy, create jobs, and improve the lives of Wisconsin residents. I am excited to see these advances continue and encourage you to contact me with your thoughts on how to keep Wisconsin moving forward.

Sincerely,

Samantha J. Kerkman
State Representative
61st Assembly District

KEEP IN TOUCH

CAPITOL OFFICE:

315 North, State Capitol
P.O. Box 8952 • Madison, WI 53708

Phone: (608) 266-2530

FAX: (608) 282-3661

Toll-Free: (888) 529-0061

E-mail:

Rep.Kerkman@legis.wi.gov

Web:

<http://legis.wisconsin.gov/assembly/asm61/news>

61ST DISTRICT OFFICE:

P.O. Box 156
Powers Lake, WI 53159

Phone: (262) 279-1037

SAM'S COMMITTEES IN THE STATE ASSEMBLY

Joint Committee on Audit (Co-Chair)

Ways & Means

Judiciary

Children & Families



REPRESENTATIVE SAMANTHA KERKMAN

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LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Foodstamp Bill Penalizes Trafficking of SNAP Benefits

One of my legislative priorities this session has been creating greater transparency in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Wisconsin FoodShare. The examination of FoodShare programs has been an ongoing process aimed at ensuring that each dollar appropriated to this program is being spent as intended. The process began with an audit of FoodShare in 2011, which revealed the necessity for additional legislation to penalize the fraudulent activity and use of FoodShare benefits. I introduced Assembly Bill 82, the Foodstamp Bill, which was passed into law and became Act 42.

This piece of legislation delineates wrongful use of this assistance by defining the trafficking of SNAP benefits and allowing for the penalization of such activity. Examples of punishable activities include the buying, selling, or stealing of SNAP benefits for cash, using benefits to purchase items for the sole purpose of returning the items for cash refund, and the reselling of food purchased using SNAP benefits for cash. Penalizing the trafficking of SNAP benefits creates greater accountability within FoodShare and promotes the proper operation of this program.



Rep. Kerkman and Senator Darling at the signing of the Foodstamp Bill

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



Governor Walker and Rep. Kerkman at the ribbon cutting ceremony for EMCO Chemical Distributors

LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

Special Session Results in Tax Relief

Governor Walker called for a Special Session in October to address legislation authored by Senator Fitzgerald and Speaker Vos which allowed for \$100 million in property tax relief to Wisconsin residents. Our state began seeing regular budget surpluses after the budgetary reforms enacted during the previous biennium. These surpluses coupled with continued business growth, perhaps most notably the much anticipated Amazon distribution center in Kenosha, made the \$100 million cut possible. Within a week the bill was passed and became Act 46. \$100 million will be appropriated to the department of public instruction in two pieces over the 2013-2014 biennium. In turn, through use of the equalized aid formula, \$100 million property tax relief was created. What this means for Wisconsin homeowners is an estimated savings of \$680 over a four year period. I was a proud supporter of this legislation, and its passage was a true win for Wisconsin residents. Act 46 serves as an excellent example of the benefits associated with responsible state spending. Seeing our surplus go back into Wisconsin residents' pockets and in turn Wisconsin's economy, is certainly promising news for this biennium.

Co-Sleeping While Intoxicated

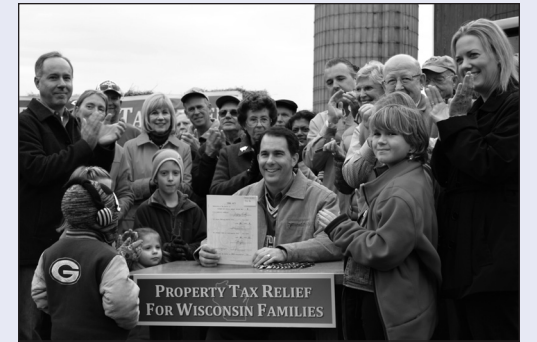
Kenosha County District Attorney Robert Zapf contacted me in regards to current law governing the issue of co-sleeping while intoxicated. Current law requires the element of intent when prosecuting cases of harm or death while co-sleeping. However, in the case of intoxication, requiring the element of strict liability rather than intent would give current law teeth and allow for injuries or deaths associated with intoxicated co-sleeping to be more successfully prosecuted. As a member of the Children and Families committee, this issue is of particular importance to me. As such, creating legislation aimed at creating a specific statute prohibiting impaired co-sleeping has been an important legislative priority of mine this session.

I introduced Assembly Bill 465, the intoxicated co-sleeping bill. This bill not only encourages responsible parenting by enforcing legal ramifications for

intoxicated co-sleeping, but also requires new parents and teens to receive educational materials on the risks of intoxicated co-sleeping. As the number of deaths associated with impaired co-sleeping continues to climb, advocating for the passage of this bill is increasingly imperative and will remain amongst my top priorities this session.



Rep. Kerkman testifies on AB 465 regarding intoxicated co-sleeping



Rep. Kerkman at the bill signing for Act 46 at the Rice family farm in Burlington



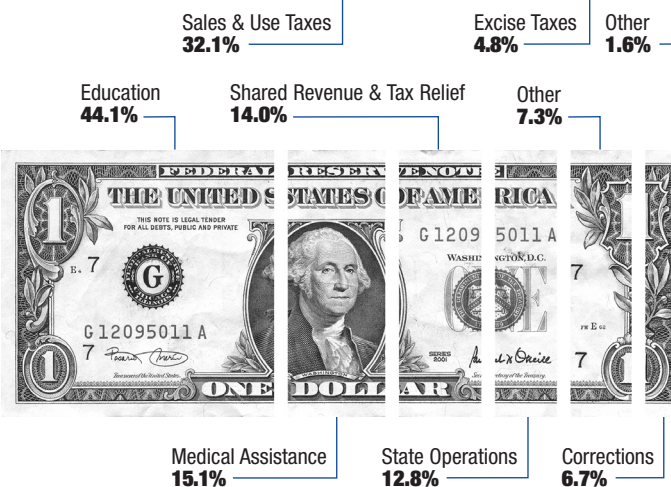
Rep. Kerkman visiting Westosha Head Start for the Wisconsin Bookworms Program

Tracking Your Tax Dollar

A breakdown of where each tax dollar came from:



A breakdown of how each tax dollar was spent:



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, and we will add you to our list.