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PROFILE OF THE 2001 WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE January 3, 2001

This brief profiles the members of the 2001 Wisconsin Legislature at the time of their inauguration on January 3, 2001. It includes information about their party affiliation, marital status, legislative experience, occupation, gender, age, educational background, and military service. A unique feature of the 2001 session is that the legislature includes two brothers, Senator Scott Fitzgerald and Representative Jeff Fitzgerald, serving simultaneously in the two houses.

This profile concludes with a summary table that offers comparable data for the last six legislatures. Similar information, dating back to the 1943 Legislature, has appeared in the *Wisconsin Blue Book* since 1956.

THE SENATE PROFILE

The senate has 33 members. When the 2001 Legislature convened on January 3, 2001, there were 18 Democrats and 15 Republicans. Of the total, 11 senators were women (the same number as in the 1999 Legislature) and two were African-American. Twenty-nine senators were married.

Legislative Experience. Of the 16 seats up for election in 2000, 13 members of the 2001 Senate were reelected, two incumbent senators were defeated, and one ran for an open seat. Seventeen members were holdover senators in the middle of their terms.

A record total of 24 senators have previous service in the assembly, surpassing the previous record of 23 in the 1999 Legislature. In terms of combined prior service in both the senate and the assembly, five senators have served in 10 or more biennial sessions; 21 served in 5-9 sessions; and the remaining seven have served in less than 5 sessions. Most notable is Senate President Fred Risser (D-26th District), who has the distinction of the longest legislative tenure in Wisconsin state history with 19 prior sessions in the senate and three in the assembly for a total of 44 years of service.

Six senators had previous experience in a legislative staff position. One served as a staff member to a U.S. Congressman and the other five worked for either a state senator or representative.

Local Government Experience. Nine senators have had experience in local government as elected public officials. Four served as county board supervisors and, of these, one was also an alderman and one was a school board member. Three additional senators served on city councils, one served as village president, and one was both a town official and a school board member.

Age. As of January 1, 2001, the average age of a senator was 52 with an age range from 37 to 73 years. The age ranges for the senators were: 5 senators in the 30-39 range; 10 in the 40-49 range; 9 in the 50-59 range; and 9 senators over 60 years of age.

Occupation. Fifteen senators list themselves as full-time legislators. One of these also lists the additional occupation of journeyman bricklayer. Five senators are currently practicing attorneys, including one who is also a realtor and owner of a small business. Other current occupations include newspaper publisher, real estate sales, dairy farming, farm management, raising exotic animals, land surveying, outdoor columnist, and nursing. Five senators list teaching as a former occupation. One senator is a retired naval officer.

Education. Of the 31 senators who continued their formal education beyond high school, 28 have academic degrees and three attended either a technical school or a college or university. Five senators hold law degrees, three have master's degrees, and 20 others hold bachelor's degrees.

Military Service. Eight senators have served in the nation's armed forces: two in the Navy, two in the Army, one in the Marine Corps, two in the Army Reserve, and one in the Wisconsin Air National Guard. One senator is a veteran of World War II and three are Vietnam War veterans.

THE ASSEMBLY PROFILE

There are 99 representatives to the assembly. When the 2001 Legislature convened on January 3, 2001, there were 56 Republicans and 43 Democrats. Twenty-two members were women, an increase of two from the 1999 session. Six representatives were African-American and one was Hispanic. Seventy-six representatives were married.

Legislative Experience. Eighty-nine representatives were reelected in 2000, while 10 are serving their first term in the assembly. (All but one of those 10 ran for open seats.) The longest-serving representative is Representative Marlin Schneider (D-72nd District), who has served in 15 prior sessions, for a total of 30 years. Representatives with 10 or more prior sessions include one with 13, one with 11, and one with 10. Other returning representatives include 30 with 5-9 sessions, 15 with 4 sessions, 8 with 3 sessions, 11 with 2 sessions, and 21 with one session.

Seventeen representatives have had previous experience in a legislative staff position. Two worked for a member of the U.S. Congress, 15 worked in the state legislature, and one who worked for a congressman and a legislator.

Local Government Experience. Of the 49 representatives who have had experience in local elected office, five held office at both the county and municipal level, 13 others held county office, and an additional 31 had municipal service.

Eighteen representatives have served as county board supervisors, 14 as city council members, seven as town board members, and two others were village trustees. Seven have served as school board members. Two were city mayors. Several representatives have held appointive governmental positions.

Age. As of January 1, 2001, the average age of a representative was 47 with an age range from 26 to 71 years. The age ranges for the representatives were: 2 in the 20-29 range; 26 in the 30-39 range; 29 in the 40-49 range; 30 in the 50-59 range; 8 in the 60-69 range; and 4 over 70 years of age.

Occupation. Forty representatives list themselves as full-time legislators (including three members who list additional occupations as electrician, attorney, and physician). Thirteen

representatives are currently farmers. Eight representatives are currently practicing attorneys and two describe themselves as nonpracticing attorneys. Among the other representatives, 10 list themselves as small business owners and three as public affairs executive or consultant. Other current occupations include: realtor or real estate salesman; farm manager; plumbing contractor; financial specialist; feed, seed, and fertilizer dealer. Former occupations listed include 16 teachers, two farmers, and two building contractors. One representative is a retired physician.

Education. Of the 86 representatives who have continued their formal education beyond high school, 67 hold academic degrees, and 19 attended a college or university or agricultural, business, technical, or trade schools after high school graduation. Listed by their highest degree, two have M.D. degrees (one of them also holds a separate master's degree) and 10 hold law degrees. Nineteen others hold master's degrees. An additional 35 have bachelor's degrees. One holds an associate degree.

Military Service. Eighteen representatives have served in the armed forces. Seven served in the Army, three in the Air Force, three in the Navy, and one in the Marine Corps. Four were members of the Wisconsin National Guard, the Wisconsin Air National Guard, or the U.S. Army Reserve. Two representatives are veterans of the Korean Conflict and 12 are Vietnam War veterans. One representative served in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

PERSONAL DATA ON WISCONSIN LEGISLATORS, 1991 – 2001 SESSIONS

	1991		1993		1995		1997		1999		2001	
	Sen.	Rep.	Sen. ¹	Rep.	Sen.	Rep.	Sen.	Rep.	Sen.	Rep.	Sen.	Rep.
Party Affiliation												
Democrat	19	58	15	52	16	48	17	47	17	44	18	43
Republican	14	41	15	47	17	51	16	52	16	55	15	56
Number with previous legislative service												
In senate	29	0	26	0	32	0	32	0	30	0	30	0
In assembly	20	85	19	76	21	87	23	89	23	78	24	89
Highest number of prior sessions in same house	14	16	15	11	16	12	17	13	18	14	19	15
Occupations												
Full-time legislator	11	48	13	50	12	40	14	38	14	38	15	40
Attorney	9	10	7	9	6	10	6	11	5	10	5	10
Farmer	3	13	3	13	1	14	0	15	1	12	1	13
Other	10	28	7	27	14	35	13	35	13	39	12	36
Education												
High school only	3	11	2	13	2	15	2	15	2	12	2	13
Beyond high school	30	88	28	86	31	84	31	84	31	87	31	86
Bachelor's or associate degree	25	73	23	68	27	66	28	66	26	67	28	67
Advanced degree	11	29	9	27	8	26	9	30	8	29	8	31
Number with experience on local government body												
County board	3	15	2	17	2	22	3	21	4	19	4	18
Municipal board	4	19	4	22	8	24	6	29	6	31	5	36
Age												
Oldest	66	78	65	70	67	69	69	71	71	69	73	71
Youngest	32	27	34	24	31	26	33	28	35	27	37	26
Average	47	45	47	46	48	45	48	46	50	46	52	47
Veterans												
Veterans	6	15	4	16	6	14	5	14	4	14	4	15
Marital status												
Single	5	24	3	27	5	28	4	25	6	23	5	23
Married	28	73	27	71	28	70	29	73	27	74	29	76
Widowed	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	0
Number of women ²	5	26	7	29	8	24	9	22	11	19	11	22

Sen. - Senators; Rep. - Representatives.

Note: Most data are recorded as of the date on which the legislature first convened; ages are determined as of January 1.

¹In 1993 there were three vacancies when the senate began its session because three incumbent senators resigned to become members of the U.S. Congress.

²The largest number of women to serve in one session was 36 in the 1993 Legislature.

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