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Rep. Jesse Kremer and Senator Devin LeMahieu Applaud Joint Finance Committee for Approving Budget Provision to Discourage Food Stamp Fraud

Madison, Wis. – On Friday, the Joint Finance Committee voted 12-4 on a motion requested by Sen. Devin LeMahieu (R-Oostburg) and Rep. Jesse Kremer (R-Kewaskum) to institute a replacement fee for lost or stolen “electronic benefit transfer” cards, otherwise known as “food stamp” cards.

In response, Sen. LeMahieu and Rep. Kremer released the following statement:

“This simple motion takes advantage of federal regulations that allow the Department of Health Services to charge recipients the actual cost of replacing lost or stolen benefit cards,” Sen. LeMahieu stated.

“Last year alone taxpayers were on the hook for replacing over 130,000 lost or stolen cards. This is a recipe for fraud. Rather than charging taxpayers for these replacement fees, this provision will hold the recipients of these public benefits accountable for the reissued cards. The replacement costs will be deducted from the balance of the reissued EBT card.”

“When fully implemented, this change is expected to save the state approximately \$455,000 per year,” Rep. Kremer continued. “Several other states, including neighboring Minnesota, already charge food stamp users for replacement cards. Taxpayers should not be stuck footing the bill for the cost of replacement food stamp cards. This is another small step toward meeting my campaign pledge to reduce waste, fraud, and abuse in government.”

“We would like to thank Senator Tom Tiffany (R-Hazelhurst) and Representative Dean Knudson (R-Hudson) for offering the motion on our behalf.”

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