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Creating HOPE to Fight Addiction

Madison—Representative Terry Katsma (R–Oostburg) voted today in support of four bills targeted at reversing Wisconsin’s drug abuse and addiction epidemic.

[Assembly Bill \(AB\) 364](#) and [AB 365](#) improve the usefulness of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program for medical professionals, law enforcement and the Department of Health Services as they dispense and monitor controlled substance use. Under the bills, pharmacies are required to update the monitoring program promptly after they fill painkiller prescriptions, and doctors will take more active measures to prevent painkiller abuse.

[AB 366](#) and [AB 367](#) are aimed at fighting back against “pill mills” (that intentionally dispense narcotics inappropriately) that often disguise themselves as legitimate for-profit businesses or medical employees. The new measures require certain clinics to register and file annual reports with the Department of Health Services—measures that will help catch and deter bad actors.

“Many of the people who abuse medications are prescribed the same drugs by the same doctors—and fill those prescriptions at the same pharmacies—time after time,” said Rep. Katsma. “We are losing the battle against drug abuse, addiction and overdose. The numbers are getting worse, not better. But the steps we took today are going to help reverse this trend by helping doctors, pharmacists and police not only identify those who need assistance but also prevent addiction in the first place.”

All four bills passed in the Assembly today with overwhelming bipartisan support and build upon earlier successes of the HOPE (Heroin and Opiate Prevention and Education) Agenda. They now await action by the state Senate.

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Representative Terry Katsma represents the 26th Assembly District including the cities of Sheboygan and Sheboygan Falls; the villages of Adell, Oostburg, Random Lake and Cedar Grove; and the towns of Lima, Holland, Sherman and Wilson. He serves as the Vice-Chair of the Committee on Financial Institutions and as a member of the committees on Consumer Protection, Housing and Real Estate, Ways and Means and Workforce Development.