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For Immediate Release
July 9, 2015

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Rep. Katsma Votes to Pass State Budget, Repeals Prevailing Wage

Madison—Representative Terry Katsma (R–Oostburg) voted yesterday to pass the 2015-17 state budget in the Assembly. The budget bill repeals Wisconsin’s prevailing wage law for local government and school district projects, increases state funding for K-12 public education and freezes tuition fees at the University of Wisconsin.

“This plan puts Wisconsin taxpayers first,” said Rep. Katsma. “There are no new taxes in this budget. Overall borrowing is down to a level we haven’t seen since the 1980s. We reduced the income tax ‘marriage penalty.’ We fully funded our \$270 million rainy day fund and still expect to enter 2017 with a small surplus. My constituents are accustomed to living within their means, and I want to thank everyone who contacted me to help make the tough decisions we had to make this year to ensure that the government also lives within its means.

“Repealing prevailing wage for all local projects—and adopting federal law for state-level projects—is going to save every taxpayer a lot of money. And it is going to give small businesses the opportunity to participate in projects that have been out of reach until now because of the huge administrative cost of complying with the old law.

“Education has always been a tremendous priority for my constituents and for me, and we set the right priorities for Wisconsin’s future by investing heavily in education. Public schools will receive a funding increase; qualifying families will have additional opportunities to enroll in the school choice program; college will remain affordable for our young adults; and, for the first time, teachers will be allowed to deduct classroom expenses from their income taxes.

“I am also pleased that my colleagues agreed with me and ensured that any highway construction delays will be spread fairly across the state instead of giving preference only to megaprojects in the southeast. I am confident that the expansion project for State Highway 23 will remain a priority as soon as the federal legal battle is resolved.”

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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.