



# TERRY KATSMAS

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## Curbing Waste, Fraud and Abuse in Public Benefits

**Madison**—Representative Terry Katsma (R–Oostburg) voted in the state Assembly yesterday in support of new efforts to crack down on the misuse of public benefit programs. The Assembly approved a series of bills to improve the integrity of benefits that help individuals and families in need.

“The handful of bad actors who intentionally defraud our FoodShare and unemployment benefit programs are stealing from the families who really are in need,” said Rep. Katsma. “These fraud prevention efforts are worth the investment.”

Assembly Bill (AB) 222 adds photo identification to FoodShare benefit cards. AB 200 limits the number of replacement FoodShare cards that may be requested in a calendar year. AB 188 deletes unused benefits from FoodShare accounts after one year of inactivity. And AB 212, the “Two Strikes and You’re Out” bill, disqualifies an offender from receiving unemployment benefits for seven years if he or she commits two intentional acts of fraud.

“These programs are supposed to be need-based, but we have people ‘replacing’ a dozen or more FoodShare cards in a year,” explained Rep. Katsma. “Benefit cards are not intended to be sold or traded at taxpayers’ expense. Under these bills, we can cut down on abuse of the system and help that many more needy families. No one will lose their benefits unless they either fail to use their benefits for an entire year or are proven to be defrauding the government.”

These bills move next to the state Senate for consideration.

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*Representative Terry Katsma represents the 26<sup>th</sup> 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.*