



MARK BORN

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 39TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 26, 2018

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Building on our Successes

If you turn on the news or open up a newspaper these days, you will probably walk away thinking the status quo is all doom and gloom. You will also probably hear a lot about the divisiveness and negativity taking place in Washington DC. Thankfully, the picture painted in the media could not be more different from the positive things that are happening right here in Wisconsin. Our economy is thriving, businesses are investing and creating jobs, and our state budget once again has a surplus. The state of our state is historically strong and we are in a position to make critical investments in Wisconsin issues that are important to our constituents, as well as return money to Wisconsin's hardworking taxpayers.

We have received a lot of positive economic news over the course of the last few weeks. Figures recently released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics show Wisconsin's unemployment rate currently stands at 3.0 percent, which is tied for the lowest in state history, and a full 1.1 percent below the national average. It is also 6.2 percent lower than it was in 2010 before Republicans took control in Madison. Additionally, new projections by the nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau show the state expects to take in more tax revenue over the next two years than previously estimated. As a result, our budget surplus has increased by \$137.5 million. Beginning this year, Governor Walker has proposed reinvesting \$50 million of this surplus to support the creation of new businesses and expansion of existing small businesses in rural areas. This is a great step toward improving economic development in outstate areas, including Dodge County, and shows we committed to fostering even more economic growth statewide.

Business expansion and job creation have been so robust that businesses are having a difficult time finding qualified candidates to fill positions. In order to help address this issue, I have co-sponsored legislation that would develop and implement a marketing campaign aimed at attracting workers from other states to work for Wisconsin companies. I am optimistic this proposal will help bolster our workforce by drawing more people to Wisconsin and highlighting all the great things our state has to offer to young families. In addition to this initiative, legislative leaders and Governor Walker have proposed reforms to our welfare system to ensure our public assistance programs are being used merely as a trampoline not a hammock. Our goal is not to keep people from receiving benefits, but rather to make it easier for them to get a job. Getting more people to enroll in job training and explore employment opportunities will help bolster our workforce and grow our economy.

Beyond the strength of our state's economy, I would like to highlight several other great initiatives we are currently undertaking in the State Assembly. Around my district I continue to hear about the importance of our local schools, which is why we made a record increase investment of \$636 million in public education in this year's budget. Building on this policy, our Assembly team has led the charge to increase the revenue limit



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for our low-revenue school districts and increase sparsity aid. In doing so, our low-revenue, predominantly rural, schools will have access to more funds that allows them to catch up with their higher-spending neighboring districts.

One of our other top priorities has always been Wisconsin families. Beyond the additional funding for education, Governor Walker has proposed returning more money to our hard-working families with a \$100 per-child tax credit. This additional flexibility will help families pay for additional school supplies, or a co-payment for a doctor's visit. The Governor has also proposed spending \$200 million to stabilize the state health insurance market in order to keep insurance affordable, and guarantee individuals with pre-existing conditions are covered in the state. Moreover, our ambitious spring session agenda also includes continued work on curbing our state's heroin and opiate epidemic, seeking permanent federal approval for SeniorCare, and passing legislation to strengthen our foster care system.

Even as our state continues to thrive, we still have important work to do. That is why I continue to listen to my constituents, and urge all of you to contact my office with your input on these issues or other things that may improve our great state. Through successful budgeting and common-sense conservative principles, our state is in a prime position to enact these goals to make Wisconsin and the 39th Assembly District an even better place to live, work, and raise a family.

Rep. Mark Born resides in Beaver Dam and represents the 39th District in the Wisconsin State Assembly.

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