



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
GARY HEBL
46TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 24, 2007

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
Representative Gary Hebl/608-266-7678

COLUMN

SUN PRAIRIE NATIVE EXPERIENCES STATE GOVERNMENT UP CLOSE

MADISON - As an intern in the office of State Representative Gary Hebl (D-Sun Prairie), Sun Prairie resident Joe Wright got the chance to see the state Legislature up close.

"Quite frankly, I learned exactly what government does, and who the players were," Wright said of the internship, which began in June. "Before my internship, my understanding of State Government was very vague, but by working there, I was exposed to the issues and concerns that confront State Government on a daily basis."

During his internship, Wright was responsible for clerical duties, constituent relations tasks, media monitoring and staffing legislative hearings.

"Joe was a valuable addition to my staff this summer," Hebl said of Wright's contributions during his internship. "I think it is very important for students to take advantage of internship opportunities like this because they are great learning experiences."

For Wright, the most interesting and significant activity occurred on committee meeting days and legislative session days. During committee hearings, Wright's main responsibility was monitoring the hearing by taking notes and serving as Rep. Hebl's courier delivering items to and from the office to the hearing rooms.

"I really enjoyed this part, as it allowed me to observe just what legislators do, as well as hear the different sides regarding an issue at hand," Wright said.

During his work in the Hebl office, Wright said he spent much of his time learning about issues related to the Ways and Means Committee. The experience of attending the hearings and listening to the testimony from experts and constituents affected by

the various legislative initiatives under discussion, Wright said gave him new perspective on numerous issues.

"Through this job, I got to hear widely disparate viewpoints, and often passionate testimonies which allowed me to conclude that these issues were much more intricate than I had previously thought," he said.

Wright said the fact that he is a Sun Prairie resident was helpful in navigating his way around the district and offering the resident's perspective.

"I was able to recognize the names of many constituents who wrote or called into the office," Wright said. "This was especially useful when I had to respond to them, as this knowledge allowed me to use a more personal touch in my correspondence."

Wright said as a result of his experience in the Legislature he would seriously consider a career in public service - maybe even running for elected office himself someday - but not until he's had more experience in the political arena and in life in general.

"I could see myself involved in government work," Wright said of his future plans. "I'm really interested in the discourse that surrounds issues such as, the environment, education and health-care, all of which are intimately related to government."

Wright is graduating from the University of Minnesota in December and plans to attend Law School next fall. As a result of his experience in the Hebl office, Wright said he will enter law school with a more complete perspective on the law and on how laws are made.

More than anything he worked on, Wright said ultimately the best part of the internship was working for Gary.

"Working with Gary was an amazing experience," he said. "In addition to being very intelligent and caring, he is just simply a great guy overall. I think that Gary is really like a teacher, he delights in sharing with others what he knows. I feel very lucky to have spent my summer at his office."

###