

Wisconsin State Representative
KAREN HURD

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

SPRING 2026



“It has been my honor to serve the people of the 69th Assembly District. Thank you for trusting me to be your representative in Madison.”

Representative
Karen Hurd

CONTACT ME

Want to keep up-to-date with what's going on in the district? Contact me at any of the following:

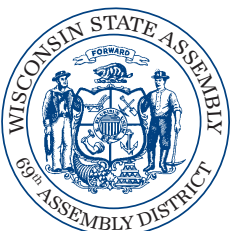
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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

As the 2025-2026 Legislative Session comes to a close, I would like to thank you, the hardworking people of the 69th Assembly District, for the trust you have placed in me to be your voice at the State Capitol. It is an honor to serve you! I am pleased to provide you with this newsletter to share some of the highlights of the legislative session. A few of my legislative projects this session include:

- Working with my colleagues on the Joint Finance Committee to craft a responsible bipartisan state budget that:
- Delivers \$1.5 billion in tax relief
- Provides a historic increase of \$500 million in special education funding
- Reauthorizes the successful Agriculture Roads Improvement Program at \$150 million over the two-year budget
- Creates the new \$65 million Elementary School Readiness Program to support our state's child care industry
- Joining with colleagues around the state to bring forward legislation to create and fund a new state matching grant program to aid homeless veterans
- Expanding the child care expenses that are eligible for the business development tax credit
- Bringing forward legislation to reestablish legislative oversight of the rulemaking process by state agencies
- Reforming the permitting process for agricultural chemical warehouses to streamline approval and protect the environment

I am happy about what we have accomplished this legislative session, and I look forward to continuing to serve you. Together, we will keep moving Wisconsin forward!

God bless you!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Karen Hurd'.

Karen Hurd
State Representative
69th Assembly District

A Bipartisan Budget for Wisconsin

As a member of the Joint Finance Committee, I worked with my colleagues to craft a responsible state budget that reflects the priorities of the 69th Assembly District. After months of input from constituents and negotiations with Governor Evers, the Legislature reached agreement on several key components, including tax relief, special education funding, and transportation investments.

The budget delivers \$1.5 billion in tax relief by expanding the second income tax bracket, creating a retirement income tax exclusion for individuals age 67 and older, and extending the sales tax exemption for residential electricity and natural gas year-round. It also provides a historic increase of more than \$500 million in special education funding.

To improve roads and bridges, the budget reauthorizes the Agricultural Roads Improvement Program at \$150 million with 20% dedicated to bridge and culvert repairs. It also restores and increases general transportation aids, including a 3% increase in each year of the budget, benefiting towns and rural communities across the state.

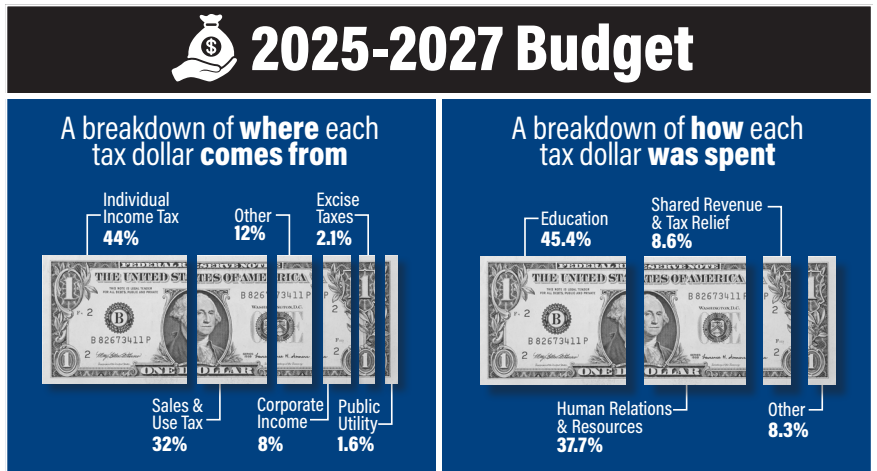
Encouraging Investments in Child Care

In addition to the items mentioned earlier, the state budget also made significant investments in improving child care access in Wisconsin such as the creation of the new \$65 million Elementary School Readiness Program. In addition to these investments, I also brought forward legislation to expand the child care expenses eligible for the Business Development Tax Credit (BDTC).

Currently, the BDTC allows businesses to claim up to 15% of investments in employee child care programs, but only for capital expenses, limiting its usefulness to large employers that can build on-site facilities. This bill broadens eligibility to include operating costs, employee child care reimbursements, the purchase or reservation of child care slots, employer contributions to dependent care FSAs, and other expenses that help employees access child care. At the time I am writing this update this bill has cleared the Legislature and is heading to Governor Evers' desk. I hope that by the time this newsletter reaches your mailbox, it will have been signed into law.

Standing Up for Our Homeless Veterans

Although the Veterans Housing and Recovery Program (VHRP) received a 15% funding increase in the state budget, the Evers-Rodriguez administration chose to close the VHRP facilities in Green Bay and Chippewa Falls last year and left veterans caught in the middle. After this decision was made, I joined with several of my colleagues to bring forward legislation to provide an alternative. Assembly Bills 596 and 597 create and funds a \$25-per-day, per-veteran state matching grant for non-state organizations that receive federal per diem funding to house homeless veterans, using unspent funds from the veterans trust fund. Instead of being confined to a small number of locations, this matching grant will allow organizations across Wisconsin who wish to serve homeless veterans to do so. These proposals have cleared the Legislature and I hope that by the time you are reading this update that they will have been signed into law by the governor.



An Idea from the 69th

Recently, Senator James and I brought forward legislation at the request of a constituent who owns an agricultural chemical business in the district. High winds had blown down a storage building at his business, and he was seeking approval from the state to rebuild it exactly how it was. However, the state agency told him he needed to install an automatic fire sprinkler system. While sprinklers can be a very effective fire suppression tool, in buildings that are used to store certain agricultural chemicals, water from a sprinkler system can pose serious environmental risks. After nine months of back-and-forth, a variance from the sprinkler requirement was approved, but only after significant lost income and thousands of dollars in engineering costs. This bill prevents this situation by exempting these types of warehouses from sprinkler requirements, while excluding any attached offices or retail spaces.

As I am writing this, this bill has passed the Assembly and is under consideration in the Senate. Hopefully, this bill will earn the approval of that house before the end of the session, and be signed into law by Governor Evers.



Speaker's Task Force on Rulemaking

Last summer, the Wisconsin Supreme Court's decision in *Evers v. Marklein* overturned decades of precedent by limiting the Legislature's ability to delay or block administrative rules through Joint Committee for Rules and Regulations without full legislative and gubernatorial approval. As a result, many longstanding oversight tools are now subject to legal challenge, creating uncertainty around the Legislature's role in overseeing state agencies.

In response, I served on the Speaker's Task Force on Rulemaking, which was charged with strengthening legislative oversight of agency rulemaking. At public hearings across the state, Wisconsinites consistently raised concerns about the loss of legislative authority, viewing it as a separation-of-powers issue rather than a partisan one. I drafted several bills tackling this issue to restore balance of power between the state agencies and the state legislature. This legislation reflects the task force's recommendations and are part of a broader legislative package to restore appropriate legislative oversight.

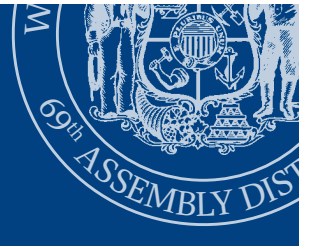




Wisconsin State Representative

KAREN HURD

Representing the 69th Assembly District which includes all of Clark County and portions of Chippewa, Marathon and Taylor Counties.



Representative Karen Hurd
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First Responder of the Year

In October, I had the pleasure of presenting the “First Responder of the Year” award to Roger Nitschke, from the Granton Fire Department. He has served the Granton community in many ways for over 50 years. He is an active member of the fire department, serving as secretary for 35 years and as assistant chief for 25 years. Those who nominated him noted that Roger is always overseeing fire scenes and directing personnel to where they are needed most. They also shared that he serves as a mentor to the next generation of volunteer firefighters. In addition to his service as a first responder, Roger is an active member of Zion American Lutheran Church and the Granton FFA Alumni. Granton is fortunate to have someone like Roger, who gives so much to the community.

