



Media Release

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Contact: Rep. Katrina Shankland
(608) 267-9649

Rep. Shankland Testifies on her Bipartisan Legislation to Support Local Government

MADISON – Yesterday, Rep. Katrina Shankland (D- Stevens Point), along with Rep. Todd Novak (R- Dodgeville), testified in front of the Assembly Committee on Government Accountability and Oversight on Assembly Bill 310 (AB 310), their bill to streamline the process for local government to hold a referendum. The bill accomplishes this by providing local governments the latitude to use estimates instead of net new construction numbers, which eases the restrictions on their timeline for general elections, allowing local governments to pose referendum questions during regularly scheduled elections rather than holding special elections. AB 310 has now received public hearings in Wisconsin State Assembly and State Senate committees.

As the author of this legislation, Rep. Shankland issued the following statement:

“Last year, when Portage County was exploring a referendum for the Portage County Health Care Center, I worked closely with the Department of Revenue and folks across the county who had an interest in sustainably funding our health care center to ensure they could go to referendum. But the process was fraught and inefficient, with our current state statutes creating unnecessary hurdles.

“Over the past year, I've spearheaded the effort to change our referendum law to 1) save taxpayer money by incentivizing the use of general elections instead of special elections, 2) streamline the process to make government more efficient, and 3) empower our counties and municipalities to use the law as it was intended. Working with the Counties Association, the League of Municipalities, the Towns Association, and county clerks across the state, I drafted legislation to address this issue and introduced the bill with bipartisan support in both houses.

“I am pleased that this bill has received a public hearing and will continue to work across the aisle to advocate for respect and support for our local governments across Wisconsin.”

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Photo (below): Rep. Katrina Shankland testifies in favor of AB 310 before the Assembly Committee on Government Oversight and Accountability on November 6, 2019. (Photo by Joe Koshollek, Capitol Photographer)

