



Media Release

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Rep. Shankland: Statement on Special Session on Statewide Binding Referenda

MADISON- Today, Governor Tony Evers announced that he is calling a special session of the Legislature to consider legislation creating a statewide binding referendum process through a constitutional amendment, allowing voters to file petitions with the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) to hold a vote on proposed state laws and constitutional amendments or to repeal current state law.

Rep. Katrina Shankland (D-Stevens Point) issued the following statement regarding today's announcement:

"Democracy functions best when everyone's voice is heard. I appreciate Governor Evers' call for a special session to create a statewide binding referendum process. This is an issue I have supported consistently in the Legislature as a cosponsor of [a bill](#) to allow the people to initiate and approve constitutional amendments. More than 20 other states, including Michigan, Illinois, and Ohio, allow voters to change their state laws by referendum. The people of Wisconsin deserve the opportunity to make their voices heard and take a stand at the ballot box on issues that matter to them.

When it comes to issues like reproductive freedom in Wisconsin, voters must have the opportunity to be heard. Despite a majority of people across Wisconsin and the country supporting legal access to abortion, our state still has a law from 1849 that would criminalize abortion and jail medical providers. I support Governor Evers' proposal, which would allow the people of Wisconsin to repeal this extreme pre-Civil War era law, which provides no exceptions for cases of rape or incest.

Should this special session bill ultimately be successful, voters would be empowered to repeal outdated and unjust laws as well as pass new constitutional amendments to protect their rights, paving the way for individuals to make their own reproductive health choices without governmental interference. As a legislator who will continue to defend our reproductive freedoms as well as advocate for the people's voices to be heard, I am glad to see Governor Evers' continuous support and effort to restore reproductive healthcare access in Wisconsin. Let the people decide — the will of the people should be the law of the land."

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