

# Jeremy Thiesfeldt

## 2012 Legislative Report

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Rep. Thiesfeldt facilitates a discussion with Sec. Dennis Smith of the Department of Health Services (right), Deputy Sec. Kitty Rhoades, and David Boelter (left) at the Arc of Fond du Lac on how to better care for those in need.

### Contact Jeremy and His Staff

My staff and I are always willing to be of service to you. If you have questions, need legislative updates, maps and Blue Books, or if you would like me to speak at your group or function, please contact my office toll free at **(888) 529-0052** or by email at [Rep.Thiesfeldt@legis.wi.gov](mailto:Rep.Thiesfeldt@legis.wi.gov)

### Unclaimed Property, Are You on This List?

The Office of the State Treasurer has published new names of unclaimed property in the state. There are over a thousand people from my district alone! For more information call **(800) 462-2814** or on the Web [www.ost.state.wi.us](http://www.ost.state.wi.us).

### Helpful Toll-Free Numbers

- Aging & Long Term Care . . . . . **(800) 242-1060**
- Arson Tip Line . . . . . **(800) 362-3005**
- Business Hotline . . . . . **(800) 435-7287**
- Consumer Protection . . . . . **(800) 422-7128**
- Crime Victim Center . . . . . **(800) 446-6564**
- Drug Tip Hotline . . . . . **(800) 622-3784**
- DNR . . . . . **(888) 936-7463**
- EdVest Hotline . . . . . **(888) 338-3789**
- Firearms Hotline . . . . . **(800) 262-4867**
- Insurance Complaints . . . . . **(800) 236-8517**
- Lawyer Referral and Info Service . . **(800) 362-9082**
- Tourism . . . . . **(800) 432-8747**
- Veterans Hotline . . . . . **(800) 947-8387**
- WI Farms Center . . . . . **(800) 942-2474**

### Rep. Jeremy Thiesfeldt

- Phone . . . . . **(608) 266-3156**
- Toll-Free . . . . . **(888) 529-0052**
- Fax . . . . . **(608) 282-3652**

[Rep.Thiesfeldt@legis.wi.gov](mailto:Rep.Thiesfeldt@legis.wi.gov)



Rep. Thiesfeldt speaks with students from Evans Elementary during their capitol tour.

### Visit the Capitol

School groups and visitors are always welcome to take advantage of the free capitol tours. Anyone interested in scheduling a tour should contact the Capitol Tour and Information Desk at **(608) 266-0382**. Once you have scheduled a tour date, feel free to contact me so I may arrange to speak with your group and also set up a photo opportunity.



# Jeremy Thiesfeldt

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### Jeremy Thiesfeldt

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 52nd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

It has been an honor and privilege to serve the good citizens of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District for the past two years. Since taking the oath of office on Jan. 3, 2011, our state has been the focal point of much national media regarding landmark changes that will positively impact Wisconsin for years to come.

Upon taking office last year, our state was facing a fiscal crisis unprecedented in generations. State spending and bonding had been growing rapidly for years and was out of control. The projected state budget deficit for the 2011-13 biennium was \$3.6 billion, one of the largest in state history. Recent legislatures and governors seemed to be dealing with the growing problems by using accounting tricks and tax and fee increases.

My goal upon taking office was to take up the challenge of setting Wisconsin on a path toward reestablishing fiscal responsibility and prosperity for its citizens. The past two years have seen many steps taken toward fulfilling these goals. While some of the modifications have been difficult choices, I strongly believe that the result of the bold initiatives will be a renewed Wisconsin to pass on to our children.

Wisconsin has always been a great place to raise a family. Strong commitments have been made to preserve this birthright for the next generations. In order to accomplish this, our state must once again be a magnet for businesses offering good jobs. Due to the reforms that we have put in place, the Badger State will continue to make a strong commitment to education, job training, health, public safety, and infrastructure. While the national and international economies continue to be sluggish, our state is poised to rebound. The State of Wisconsin is well-positioned to face the challenges before us.

As I have done often, I will continue to visit communities and attend events within the 52<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District. Furthermore, I will also continue to hold office hours, listening sessions, and town hall meetings to gauge the pulse of the district. It is important for me to hear your opinions and ideas for legislation. Please feel free to contact the capitol office on any state issue of concern to you.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Thiesfeldt  
State Representative



Rep. Thiesfeldt speaks on the floor of the Assembly during a debate.

### Keep in Touch

#### Capitol Office:

PO Box 8953  
Room 16 West  
Madison, WI 53708

#### Email & E-Updates:

*Please stay up to date by signing up for E-Updates or sending in your thoughts.*

[Rep.Thiesfeldt@legis.wi.gov](mailto:Rep.Thiesfeldt@legis.wi.gov)

#### Telephone:

(608) 266-3156

#### Toll-free:

(888) 529-0052

### JEREMY'S 2011-12 LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES

- Committee on Children and Families
- Committee on Education
- Committee on Urban and Local Affairs
- Committee on Criminal Justice and Corrections



# Rep. Jeremy Thiesfeldt's 2012 Legislative Update



Rep. Thiesfeldt spends a day with Judge Peter Grimm to learn more about the criminal justice system. Rep. Thiesfeldt serves on the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Corrections.

## Authored Legislation

**Felons in Schools (Act 83)**—This law permits an educational agency to refuse to employ or to terminate from employment an unpardoned felon. This common-sense legislation was signed into law in November of 2011 and gives an added layer of protection to our students.

**Voter Registration Officials in High Schools (AB 481, on the Governor's desk)**—This bill will repeal outdated 1976 statute 6.28 (2) which mandates high schools have a municipal clerk or certified high school staff to register students 18 years or older and staff during the open window registration dates. Voting-age students have different modes and far fewer restrictions when registering to vote than their 1976 counterparts. This bill will help provide efficiency for the increasing duties placed on municipal clerk offices.



Jeremy serves constituents coffee at the 2011 Fond du Lac County Breakfast on the Farm.

**Strong Communities & Healthy Kids (AB 337, on the Governor's desk)**—This bill returns local control to school districts so that schools may better reflect their community's values in teaching students human growth and development.

## Authored Pending Legislation

**Coverdell Tax Deduction (AB 466)**—Wisconsin currently allows a tax deduction for Edvest College Savings account contributions. This bill will allow certain educational expenses to be deducted for K-12 under the federal Coverdell Education Savings Account (CESA). CESA is an account created as an incentive to help parents and students save for their education.

**Responsible Budgeting for "Other Post Employment Benefits" (AB 219)**—This bill would make sure that local governments plan for and fund "other post-retirement benefits" of local government employees. Local governments would have to set money aside through actuarial accounting methods so the money is available upon retirement. This bill would have no impact on pensions.

## Legislative Successes

**Voter Identification**—Insures the integrity of the election process and reduces voter fraud. No legal vote should be diminished by fraudulent ballots. (Pending legal challenge)

**Concealed Carry**—Begins to restore Second Amendment rights in Wisconsin. We join 48 other states that follow the US Constitution by affirming this method of self-defense.

**Castle Doctrine**—Strengthens current self-defense statutes by guaranteeing the right to defend within in one's dwelling, motor vehicle and place of business.

**School Choice**—Added Racine as a community where parents may receive vouchers to send their children to a school of their choice that best suits their needs.

## Tough Decisions for a Tough Budget

### ☑ Passing a Balanced Budget

The 2011-2013 state budget started with a projected \$3.6 billion deficit. Despite this deficit, we passed the first balanced budget in decades that didn't use accounting tricks, unconstitutional raids on segregated funds, or one-time stimulus dollars.

### ☑ Taxes

Unlike Illinois, we did not raise taxes in the budget.

### ☑ Protecting our Seniors

Assembly Republicans balanced the budget while also fully funding the successful and widely popular SeniorCare program. This program helps ensure access to medications for low-income seniors.

### ☑ Paying Our Bills

Wisconsin had two major outstanding debts to start this session: \$58 million owed to Minnesota for income tax reciprocity and over \$200 million to the Patients' Compensation Fund that was illegally raided by the previous administration. We were able to repay these debts and still pass a balanced budget.

### ☑ Supporting our Veterans

Under this budget, we were able to fully fund the Veterans Trust Fund and affirmed to veterans that the state will support them and their families.

### ☑ Property Tax Freeze

Wisconsin citizens now have some certainty and stability after we passed a freeze on property tax rates with no "sunset." This provision of the budget will help families and seniors stay in their homes.

### ☑ Education

Higher education was protected by preventing schools from cutting financial aid to students seeking a college education. Schools were allowed to offset budget reductions through increased pension and healthcare contributions.



Testifying with Sen. Lazich on the Strong Communities & Healthy Kids Bill during an Assembly Committee on Education hearing.

## Jobs

This session we have passed over 60 job related bills that directly impact the business climate in a positive way. Here is just a very small sampling.

### Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

Creating a focused separate entity to negotiate with corporations to attract and expand businesses within Wisconsin.

**Jobs Tax Credit**—Increasing the already successful program from \$5 million to \$10 million annually.

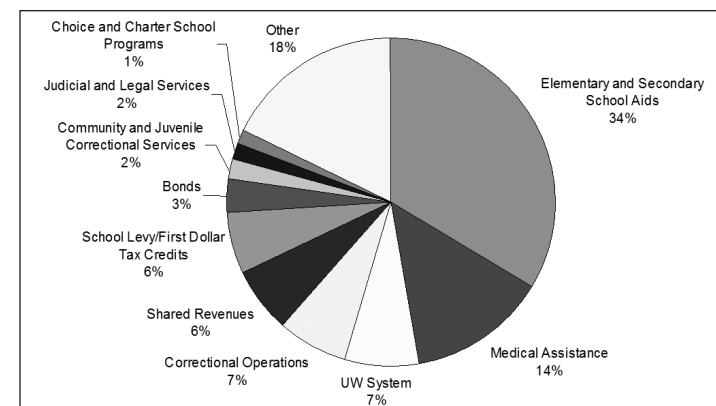
**Ending Frivolous Lawsuits**—Providing much needed tort reform, helping to end frivolous and unwarranted lawsuits which are costly and damaging to the entrepreneurial spirit.

### Manufacturing and Agriculture Tax Credit

Designing a tax credit to offset 95% of the manufacturing and agricultural tax liability, which will be phased in over four years. This tax credit will save millions of taxpayer dollars and spur tremendous manufacturing and agricultural development in our state, leading to more family-supporting jobs.



Rep. Thiesfeldt honors Dr. Gayle Hytrek with a retirement plaque. Dr. Hytrek served as president of Moraine Park Technical College for the last 7 years.



This pie graph represents how the state is allocating your tax dollars in the 2011-2013 budget by major category.



After 21 years of teaching, Rep. Thiesfeldt thoroughly enjoys his invitations to meet with students in the classroom to discuss civic duty. He is pictured here with Elizabeth Severson's Fond du Lac High School class.