



Samantha J. Kerkman

State Representative • Serving the 66th Assembly District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 28, 2012

CONTACT: State Representative Samantha J. Kerkman

608-266-2530

Public Hearing Highlights Concerns about Possible Fraud in FoodShare

Madison: Today, the Joint Legislative Audit Committee held a public hearing on the FoodShare Wisconsin program. The Committee discussed the results of two audit reports, *FoodShare Benefits Spent Outside of Wisconsin* and *FoodShare Wisconsin*, reports 12-3 and 12-8 respectively.

FoodShare is a program funded by the federal government and administered by the Department of Health Services (DHS) that assists low-income families with purchasing food. State Representative Samantha Kerkman (R-Randall) first requested an audit of the FoodShare program in June 2010. In April 2011, the Committee directed the Legislative Audit Bureau to perform the audit, which was released as two reports (12-3 and 12-8) earlier this year. At the hearing, the Audit Committee engaged in a thorough discussion about fraud identification and reduction efforts in FoodShare. Representatives from the Legislative Audit Bureau, DHS and the Hunger Taskforce testified before the Committee.

The two audit reports draw attention to areas of potential misuse and fraud within FoodShare. These areas include assistance groups who requested ten or more replacement benefits cards within one year, benefits dispensed to accounts of incarcerated persons, and assistance groups whose benefits were spent exclusively in states far from Wisconsin.

“Today’s discussion provided a comprehensive look at FoodShare in our state,” said Rep. Kerkman after the hearing. “Our goal as a Committee is to shine a light on this large program to make sure it is working in the most efficient and effective manner. FoodShare is an important program that helps many Wisconsinites, and it is vital that our limited resources are going to those who are eligible and in need and not being misused.”

The Committee intends to continue its discussion about FoodShare. DHS will submit a follow-up report to the co-chairs in December on report 12-8. The Committee also intends to communicate with the counties about their role in reducing fraud as well as with the USDA at the federal level about the program.

#