



# Samantha J. Kerkman

State Representative • Serving the 66<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 11, 2012

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## Rep. Kerkman Applauds DHS on Fraud Prevention in FoodShare

Madison: Today, Rep. Samantha Kerkman (R-Randall) released a statement about a recent report by the Department of Health Services (DHS) to the co-chairs of the Joint Audit Committee on the FoodShare Program. The report outlines fraud investigation and prevention measures recently taken by DHS to address inefficiencies in FoodShare. DHS was asked to submit the report to the Joint Audit Committee in response to the FoodShare Wisconsin audit report (12-8) released in April by the Legislative Audit Bureau. Rep. Kerkman serves as the Assembly co-chair of the Joint Audit Committee.

In its report to the co-chairs, DHS detailed the measures it has taken to comply with the Audit Bureau's recommendations. DHS reported the latest information on its new Fraud Prevention and Investigation Program (FPIP), which in the past year has "focused on increasing investigations and more promptly disqualifying individuals from the FoodShare Program who intentionally violate program rules." In CY 2011, FPIP identified significant cost savings in DHS programs, including \$11.3 million in overall savings (including cost avoidance and overpayments). DHS estimates that an additional \$3 million in total savings will be realized by the end of CY 2012.

"The achievement of these savings is a significant accomplishment which highlights the importance of the working relationship between the Audit Committee and DHS," said Rep. Kerkman today. "The results of April's audit release have helped DHS improve accountability and strengthen oversight from the state's perspective of FoodShare, and substantial savings were realized as a result."

DHS reports that Income Maintenance Workers have been instructed on proper verification of social security numbers to determine eligibility as well as improving timeliness of FoodShare eligibility determinations. Using a model developed in North Carolina, DHS has begun sending letters to assistance groups who request at least 6 replacement EBT cards in a twelve month period which inform them that their account is being monitored. North Carolina reports a high rate of effectiveness with this policy, with only 121 assistance groups out of 1,144 that received the letter in an 11-month period continuing to request replacement cards. Additionally, DHS has increased frequency of data checks to ensure that incarcerated individuals do not continue to receive FoodShare benefits. In October 2012, DHS confirmed that 332 individuals were newly incarcerated and their benefits were then terminated. DHS estimates that \$266,400 in FoodShare dollars were saved from this single data check.

To obtain a copy of the DHS FoodShare report or of audit report 12-8, please visit the Legislative Audit Bureau's website at <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/lab/>.

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