



HOWARD MARKLEIN

STATE SENATOR • 17TH SENATE DISTRICT

Capitol Update

By Senator Howard Marklein

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Summarizing the State of the State

Governor Scott Walker delivered his State of the State speech on Tuesday, January 10, 2017. This annual speech is traditionally a combination of reflections and announcements. It is the Governor's public forum to address the legislature and to talk about our mutual successes before presenting his plans for the next year.

Governor Walker reminded us about all of the great things we have been able to accomplish over the last year. I am proud of our efforts to grow our economy, fund our schools, train our workers and streamline government while lowering taxes to the tune of \$4.7 billion.

A main theme of the Governor's speech was workforce development. Wherever I travel in the 17th Senate District, I hear from employers who are looking for qualified workers. The Governor encouraged us to continue to seek ways to get Wisconsinites trained to begin working to fill jobs in our communities.

In his speech, the Governor recognized Gavyn Prem, a student at River Valley High School. Gavyn is taking part in the Youth Apprenticeship Program. He attended the speech with his father Marty and his teacher, Heidi Radel. I am proud of Gavyn and all students like him who are participating in educational programs that train them for the workforce. Prem Meats, Gavyn's families' business is taking advantage of effective workforce development tools and initiatives. This is true of many great businesses throughout our communities.

As workforce development continues to be a focus for Governor Walker and all members of the legislature, I will continue to work with my colleagues to seek ways to deliver the training to workers throughout our state. This way they can take advantage of more than 80,000 job openings on the Job Center website as of this week. We have great jobs in Wisconsin. We need to find a way to help workers train for these jobs and encourage our citizens to improve their employment situation.

One way we are hoping to encourage our citizens to work is by asking the Federal government to allow us to create a "sliding scale" for public assistance programs. I will address this issue in more detail next week, but I wanted to mention it because it could be a very effective way to encourage our citizens who need public support to move into the workforce and gradually increase their hours and pay without putting them at risk. Stay tuned for more on this topic next week.

Public education is a major contributor to workforce development and the quality of life in our communities. I am encouraged by the Governor's announcement of his intention to increase funding for public education, especially for rural schools. He specifically said that there would be relief for transportation costs, broadband access and declining enrollment. I look forward to reviewing his plans for our communities.

The Governor's focus on education didn't stop there. He also announced an effort to reduce tuition at the UW System. While this announcement has been questioned in the days since the announcement, I am willing to take a look at the Governor's proposal in the state budget. I encourage all citizens to keep an open mind.

Overall, I was inspired by the Governor's attitude as we begin the legislative session. We have hard work to do, but we are headed in the right direction. I am approaching the new legislative session with an open mind, an eagerness to solve problems and a renewed commitment to represent rural interests in the state legislature.

For more information and to connect with me, visit my website <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/senate/17/marklein> and subscribe to my weekly E-Update by sending an email to Sen.Marklein@legis.wisconsin.gov. Do not hesitate to call 800-978-8008 if you have input, ideas or need assistance with any state-related matters.

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