

May 12, 2023



Dear friends,

By now, we should all recognize the critical role that nurses play in our health care system and in so many individual lives. International Nurses Day provides the opportunity for us to show our gratitude for their hard work, patience and compassion. International Nurses Day is celebrated worldwide every year on May 12, to coincide with the birthday of Florence Nightingale, often called the founder of modern nursing. We are currently facing a severe nursing shortage, and the stress placed on nurses during the Covid-19 pandemic certainly hasn't helped. Let's take a moment to honor and recognize any nurses in our lives and communities today.

Sincerely,

Bob

small business **SPOTLIGHT**



Supporting Small Businesses Helps our Community

Wednesday, May 10, was National Small Business Day. It is meant to celebrate small businesses and honor small business owners. Small businesses truly are the backbone of our economy; three-fifths of all new jobs come from small businesses. Small, local businesses also benefit our communities in other ways. They sponsor local sports teams; contribute prizes to fundraisers for local organizations; and best of all, because they are small and locally-owned, they keep the profits in our communities. If you weren't able to make it out on Wednesday, take some time this weekend to patronize a small business.

In Case You Missed It



“A Day without Child Care” Shines a Light on Child Care Crisis

Wisconsin faces a real and growing child care crisis. It predates the Covid-19 pandemic, but the pandemic certainly made it worse. In Wisconsin, the average annual cost of infant care is \$12,567, which is more than in-state tuition at any of the state's public four-year universities. More than half the residents of Wisconsin live in a “child care desert”, where there is either no care or not enough care to meet demand. Child care centers are having a hard time attracting staff, as the pay often doesn't align with the difficult nature of the job. All of these issues were

brought into focus on Monday, May 8, which was designated “A Day without Child Care”. Pandemic relief is set to run out at the end of this year, and Governor Evers has proposed new aid to replace it in his 2023 budget proposal. That funding would provide continued support for higher child care wages without raising tuition rates for parents. It was a good sign that this child care assistance was not among the 545 items the Republican majority stripped out of the Governor’s proposal last week. “A Day without Child Care” included events around the state to highlight the crisis and put pressure on Republicans to maintain the funding in the final budget.



KUSD Music Education Wins National Award

The Kenosha Unified School District has been named as a Best Communities for Music Education (BCME) award winner from the National Association for Music Merchants Foundation. The BCME designation is given annually to districts that demonstrate outstanding achievement in efforts to provide music access and education to all students. This is the sixth year in a row that KUSD’s music program has been recognized.



Some Wisconsin Taxpayers to Receive Checks as Part of TurboTax Settlement

Earlier this week, Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul announced that consumers who were tricked by TurboTax’s owner Intuit into paying for free tax services will begin receiving checks from a \$141 million multistate settlement announced in May 2022. Approximately 4.4 million consumers nationwide will receive part of the settlement; Wisconsin will receive more than \$2.45 million for more than 81,000 people. Checks to eligible consumers will be mailed out this

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month. Eligible consumers include those who paid to file their federal tax returns through TurboTax for tax years 2016, 2017, and 2018 but were eligible to file for free through the IRS Free File Program. Consumers who are eligible will be notified by the settlement fund administrator, Rust Consulting. There is no need to file a claim.



Letter Carriers' Food Drive This Saturday

This Saturday, May 13, 2023, the National Association of Letter Carriers will hold its annual "Stamp Out Hunger" Food Drive. Bags for the drive were distributed on Saturday, May 6. People who would like to donate can use the blue bags that were provided or bags of their own. Donation bags can be left out by your mailbox for letter carriers to collect. Locally, donations will go to the Shalom Center and Sharing Center in Kenosha County and the Racine County Food Bank in Racine County.



Take My Legislative Survey

It's very important to me as a legislator to hear what you think about the important issues of the day. I've put together a survey on a variety of topics that I am hoping you will take the time to complete. You can find an online version of the survey at <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/senate/22/wirch/surveys-and-petitions/2022-legislative-survey>.