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PRESS RELEASE

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Sen. Testin Works to Give Tools to Those Struggling with Opioid Dependence *HOPE Agenda Bills Move Forward in the State Senate*

Madison, WI: Stories of opioid abuse and the tragedies that accompany it have become all too common across the country. In Wisconsin, legislators have been on the forefront of fighting back, both to prevent abuse of these drugs and to help those who have been caught in addiction. This week, the Wisconsin State Senate passed two bills authored by State Senator Patrick Testin (Stevens Point) that will help in the fight.

Assembly Bill 647 extends the sunsets for the Electronic Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (ePDMP). The ePDMP has been an important tool that allows healthcare professionals, public health officials, law enforcement, and pharmacies to work together to keep prescriptions out of the hands of those who are seeking to abuse them.

“Collaboration is key,” said Senator Testin. “By extending the ePDMP, we’re enabling people on the front lines to communicate so that opioids don’t end up being abused.”

Legislators are also committed to helping those already struggling with addiction. Assembly Bill 650 reduces barriers to accessing opioid treatment by requiring the Department of Health Services (DHS) to provide access to peer recovery coaches as a benefit and to reimburse the cost for these services under the Medical Assistance program.

“Peer recovery coaches can play a vital role in individuals sustaining treatment,” noted Testin. “Shared life experience and the ability to meet people where they are make peer recovery coaches effective. This bill breaks down a barrier that stands between many people suffering with addiction and the treatment that they need.”

These bills have passed through both houses of the legislature and need only the Governor’s signature to become law.