

Constituent Contact Results in Legislation

After receiving a request from an entrepreneurial constituent, I introduced legislation that would allow every vehicle in a funeral procession to be equipped with a flashing amber light.

As I was going door-to-door in his neighborhood, a constituent told me about a light that he had invented to place on cars during a funeral procession. It would provide visibility and safety for the vehicles in the procession. Unfortunately, when he tried to market his product, he found out that state law would allow only the lead vehicle to be equipped with a light. He asked me to introduce a bill to change that law.

After seeing his product, I agreed that his light could enhance public safety by allowing funeral processions to be more easily seen by other drivers. I introduced Assembly Bill 159 along with our State Senator Jim Sullivan. On March 26, 2008, Governor Doyle signed this bill into law.

By staying in contact with constituents, I hope to provide answers to many questions and cut through bureaucratic red tape. Sometimes constituent contacts lead directly to legislative proposals that become Wisconsin law.



State Representative
David Cullen

LEGISLATIVE REPORT 2008

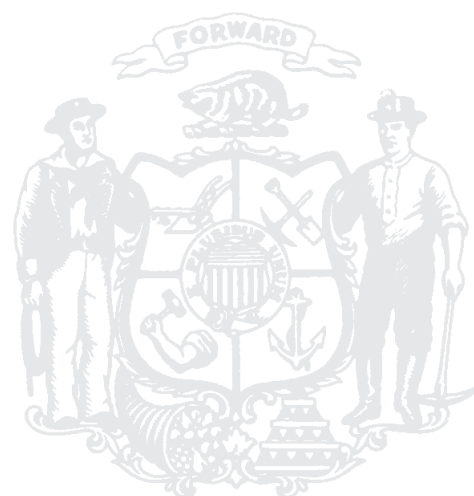
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708

CURRENT RESIDENT OR

Visiting the State Capitol

If you get the chance to visit Madison and our beautiful State Capitol, let me know ahead of time and I can help arrange your tour of the building.

I often meet with school groups, such as this one from Jefferson Elementary School in Wauwatosa, and make arrangements for other visitors as well.



WHAT'S INSIDE:

- **Ending Pay for Fired Officers**
- **Virtual Schools Get Approval**
- **Update on Great Lakes Compact**
- **Constituent Contact Leads to Law**



State Representative
David Cullen

Dear Friends –

The recent legislative session addressed many issues which may be of interest to you. Some important matters have been resolved and others need further consideration.

Inside, you will find information on the bill prohibiting fired police officers from collecting pay. You may also be interested in the funding for virtual schools and the ongoing work towards the Great Lakes Compact.

As always, I have appreciated hearing from so many of you throughout the year on a variety of very important matters. I have also had the opportunity to speak with many of you at your door while continuing my neighborhood visits, and I look forward to more input in the future.

Please feel free to contact me at my home or at my State Capitol office using any of the contact information on the inside of this newsletter. You may call, write, or email and I will respond as soon as possible

Sincerely,

DAVID A. CULLEN
State Representative
13th Assembly District

Governor Signs Bill Ending Payments to Fired Police Officers



Senate Bill 176, which I strongly supported, was recently signed into law by Governor Jim Doyle. The new law prohibits Milwaukee police officers who have been charged with a felony, Class A or Class B misdemeanor from continuing to collect their salaries while they appeal their firing. Should they be found not guilty of the charges against them, they will be allowed to collect any back pay to which they may be entitled.

Prior to the new law taking effect, Milwaukee was the only city in which fired officers could continue collecting their paychecks while appealing their termination. As we saw with the officers involved in the Frank Jude, Jr. beating case, these payments have been an unfair burden on Milwaukee taxpayers. The cost to taxpayers in this case alone was nearly \$475,000.

The new state law will prevent this outrageous practice from continuing to be a burden on taxpayers. It was a necessary change that was long overdue.

Virtual Schools Measure Passes Legislature

Virtual schools are schools that use computers to teach children at home. They have been set up with licensed teachers providing instruction via the internet. A recent Court of Appeals decision found that these schools were violating some aspects of Wisconsin's open enrollment program and therefore they could not receive public funding. As a result, the schools were at risk of closing, leaving thousands of students and their families scrambling to find a solution.

After several weeks of negotiations, the Legislature finally agreed on a compromise in Senate Bill 396. I voted in favor of this bill. The bill provided continued funding for the schools along with an audit so that it can be determined where tax dollars are being spent. The negotiations on this issue were difficult at times, but in the end a bill was passed that will allow these schools to remain open.



Great Lakes Compact Nears Approval

Following the abrupt adjournment of the State Assembly in March, one of the most important issues facing the state was left unresolved. The Great Lakes Compact had been negotiated for several years and finally agreed to by the eight governors of the Great Lakes states. As part of the agreement, each state legislature is also required to approve the compact - without change.

I drafted a proposal early in this legislative session to insert the compact's language into state law. The State Senate eventually passed a proposal to do just that, but the process in the State Assembly was blocked by the Assembly Speaker, leading to an adjournment prior to the compact being passed.

Negotiations on the compact have continued and it appears the objections of the Speaker and others have been addressed. Governor Doyle has called the legislature into special session to deal with this issue. I am confident we will resolve any remaining differences during the special session in order to ratify the compact and protect this vital natural resource.

As one constituent wrote, "the Great Lakes are a national treasure and it is important that Wisconsin pass a strong [Great Lakes] compact to protect them." I agree with that sentiment and I am a supporter of a strong Great Lakes Compact.

How to contact me:

Capitol:

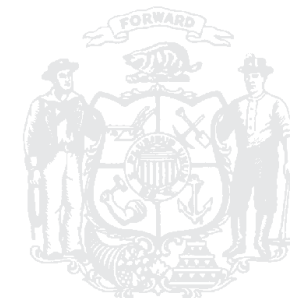
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Recently, Coach Bo Ryan of the Big Ten Champion Wisconsin Badgers basketball team visited the State Capitol. Congratulations to Coach Ryan and the team for another great season.