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SPRING 2008
Legislative Update

BadgerCare Plus – providing access to health care coverage for 98% of Wisconsin residents

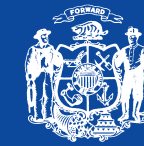


On February 1, 2008 enrollment began for the new BadgerCare Plus program, which will offer access to comprehensive, affordable health care to working families and pregnant women in Wisconsin. Most importantly, BadgerCare Plus will provide health care coverage to all children, regardless of income.

As a result of BadgerCare Plus more low income families in the La Crosse area will have access to affordable health care. With the economy facing a possible recession, the skyrocketing cost of consumer goods, and the fact that in 2006 more than 570,000 Wisconsin residents were uninsured for at least part of the year, it is more important than ever to find a solution to the growing health care crisis in our state.

By making sure that every child in Wisconsin has health care coverage, and expanding access to quality, affordable health care to more working families, BadgerCare Plus allows us to take an important step towards ensuring adequate health care for everyone. BadgerCare Plus was passed as a result of strong bi-partisan support. I am hopeful that we can continue to work in a bi-partisan manner in the next session to further expand health care coverage until all Wisconsin residents have access to care.

For further information about BadgerCare Plus, or to check enrollment eligibility, you can call the member services hotline at 1-800-362-3002 or check online at <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/badgercareplus/index.htm>.



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Jennifer Shilling

SPRING 2008

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



Dear Neighbor,

As another legislative session comes to an end I would like to update you on some of things that have been happening “under the dome” during the past seventeen months. Following a drawn-out biennial budget debate last year, the state legislature had only a few short months during the 2007-2008 session to deal with the many important issues facing our state.

While the two houses of the legislature did come together to pass some important bills; unfortunately, much of this session was characterized by missed opportunities and an unwillingness to overcome partisan differences.

As your state representative, I continue to support legislation to make health care and higher education more affordable and accessible for all families throughout the state. I was pleased that we were able to reaffirm the state’s commitment to fund 2/3 of the cost of K-12 education; and I remain committed to growing our state’s economy to ensure that Wisconsin residents are able to find family-supporting jobs, even in times of economic downturn.

In this newsletter you will find highlights of legislative proposals introduced during this past session, as well as information about helpful state government services, and an update on the new BadgerCare Plus program, which will expand health care coverage to 98% of Wisconsin residents.

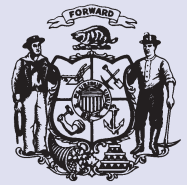
Thank you for the opportunity to represent our community in the state assembly. It continues to be an honor and a privilege to serve as the voice for the 95th Assembly District. Feel free to contact me and share your thoughts about any state government issues that are important to you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Shilling
 State Representative
 95th Assembly District

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Yours for the Asking



My legislative office in Madison has a great deal of Wisconsin recreational information and travel guides. My staff can provide you with the following resources:

- State Highway Map
- Spring/Summer Activity Guide
- Arts & Craft Fair Directory
- State Parks Guide
- Golf Course Directory
- Wisconsin Fishing Guides

Please feel free to call my office toll free at : **888-534-0095** or email me to request any of these publications.



Rep Shilling meets with representatives from UW-L who visited the State Capitol for "Posters in the Rotunda."

Visit My New Website

This spring I launched a new website to help keep residents informed about, and involved in, our state government. I will be updating this site with new information and features from time to time, and I invite you to visit and share your thoughts with me. You can access the website at:



<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/assembly/asm95/news/>

Wisconsin Veteran Care Package

This session I joined many of my Democratic colleagues in introducing several bills as part of our "Veteran Care Package." As a co-author of Assembly Bill 75, I was proud to be a part of this broad effort to ensure veterans have access to health screenings, education, and employment opportunities. AB 75 was signed into law on February 11, 2008 by Governor Doyle and will help protect National Guard members and veterans who may have been exposed to depleted uranium.

The Wisconsin G.I. Bill is another important program which will provide increased financial assistance to thousands of veterans seeking an education at a UW System school or Wisconsin technical college. Given the increasing number of veterans returning from service who are enrolling in college, it is crucial that we provide adequate state funding for these types of programs. For information on this program and other benefits and services for veterans, visit www.dva.state.wi.us or call (800) 947-8387.



Rep. Shilling talks with one of her colleagues before a committee hearing.

Bill Update

During this past session I spent a lot of time working on many legislative proposals; some of which I've been working on for many years, such as the Downtown Wisconsin Act, and some are new proposals, such as the juror counseling bill. Although these bills were not signed into law this past session, I remain committed to working with my colleagues in both parties to secure passage of these important bills in future sessions.

Cancer Research Advancement Act – AB 740

This bill would encourage important cancer research in Wisconsin's hospitals and medical research institutions by providing researchers access to the state's cancer registry data for the purpose of studying cancer prevention and treatment. The Cancer Research Advancement Act would provide our front-line medical researchers with an important tool in the ongoing battle to reduce the incidence of cancer, and help achieve the ultimate goal of finding a cure for cancer.

Counseling for Graphic Jury Trials – AB 964

In many jury trials involving graphic content, the evidence, testimony or subject matter can have a traumatic impact on jurors long after the trial has ended. Our current justice system does not have an established program to help people cope with the emotional strain of serving on a stressful jury trial. This bill would create an established program to ensure that jurors are able to access qualified psychological counseling services after an emotionally difficult jury trial.

Dental Care Pilot Project – AB 927

Access to dental care remains one of the biggest health care problems in the La Crosse area, and throughout the state. A major cause of this problem is the inadequately low reimbursement rates that dental care providers receive. AB 927 would create a pilot project in La Crosse, Racine and Brown counties to analyze the impact that increased reimbursement rates would have on improving access to dental care.

Downtown Wisconsin Act – AB 599

The Downtown Wisconsin Act is a comprehensive economic development package designed to revitalize central business districts across the state. Expanding on the successful Main Street program and other revitalization initiatives, this bill is aimed at combating many of the barriers affecting downtown development and augmenting those programs that already serve as beacons for effective business district growth.

Increased financial aid for UW-L students – AB 854

As an important component of the Growth, Quality and Access plan, this bill would have increased the amount of financial aid available to incoming UW-L students by \$439,000. Even though this bill did not pass, students attending UW-L will receive an additional \$225,000 in financial aid as part of the 2007-09 state budget.

For more information about these bills, or any other bills that I authored or co-sponsored during the 2007-2008 session, please visit my website at:

<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/assembly/asm95/news/>



Onalaska school superintendent John Burnett, Rep. Shilling and Governor Doyle watch as students sign the Wisconsin Covenant.

Helpful State Services

Homeowner's HOPE is a national, toll-free hotline that provides free counseling services to those at risk of home foreclosure. Highly trained, professional credit counselors are available to help you establish a budget, understand the terms of your loan, and talk with your financial institution 24 hours a day, 7 days a week simply by calling (888) 995-HOPE.

Money Smart Week Wisconsin is the first-ever statewide campaign in the country to promote financial literacy. This initiative was created by Governor Doyle in an effort to improve financial knowledge in Wisconsin, especially among today's youth. Thanks to financial institutions throughout the state, numerous resources are available to residents interested in becoming more knowledgeable about personal finances, budgeting, and credit information. For more information, visit www.moneysmartwi.org or call (608) 261-9540.

Student Financial Aid is available to high school graduates who are currently enrolled in or plan on attending a college or university based in Wisconsin.

Numerous grants, scholarships, and low-interest loans are offered by the state to qualified individuals. To find out if you are eligible, visit www.heab.state.wi.us or call (608) 267-2206.

Wisconsin's No Call List identifies you as someone who does not wish to receive telemarketing calls. This service is free and will help to reduce telemarketing calls to your home. If you register, your number will remain on this list for two years. To sign up or to renew your number, visit <https://nocall.wisconsin.gov/web/home.asp> or call toll free at (866) 9NO-CALL

