



State Representative

BILL KRAMER

SERVING THE 97TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Protecting Students; Waukesha's iQ Academy

In December, a Wisconsin Court of Appeals decision fell like a virtual bomb on the more than 3,000 students enrolled in virtual charter schools in our state. The parents and students found themselves in a political limbo as their digital connection to the virtual classrooms they rely on faced termination.

In response to that court case which was brought by the Madison-based teacher's union, WEAC, the State Senate, State Assembly, and Governor were able to forge a compromise that kept the virtual schools open and provided increased accountability to guarantee that taxpayer resources were being used effectively and children were receiving a quality education.

As the debate developed, my first and foremost priority was to protect the students of Waukesha and the successful iQ Academy. I worked closely with Speaker Mike Huebsch and Representative Brett Davis to ensure that the compromise treated Waukesha schools fairly.

I worked with our local School Board members and school administrators to craft an effective way to advocate for our students while their school's future was in flux.

I have heard from school officials and parents in my own district that support proposals that will keep the iQ Academy open, growing, and thriving. Waukesha's iQ Academy has been a success and proven to be very effective in reaching non-traditional students. Parents of children who attend iQ Academy have told me time and again how thankful they are for having access to the school. And officials with the school

district have flat out said that without a legislative fix, iQ Academy would have been forced to close its virtual doors.

Charter schools have received a lot of bipartisan support. Even rank-and-file union teachers have expressed support for online learning and other innovations offered in the charter schools.

This educational approach should be allowed to continue — who knows, a public school student may be able to find customized advanced-placement courses online that a district would not be able to offer in traditional “brick-and-mortar” schools.



Bill reads to students at Saratoga Elementary.

Affordable Quality Health Care

Rising healthcare costs are causing a lot of angst for working families in Waukesha and across Wisconsin. The current system is becoming very expensive for working families and removes choices that patients should have when determining their care

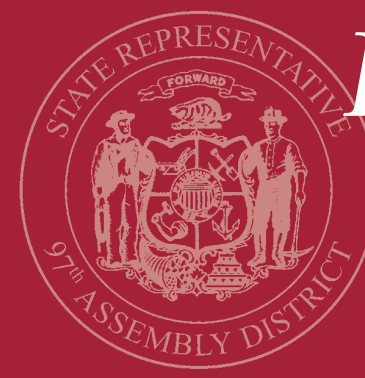
Perhaps one of the most effective ways to ease the cost for health insurance is to provide tax deductibility on the health-care premiums that we pay through our employer. Coupling this to tax deductibility for health savings accounts will make health insurance more affordable both for employers and employees.

Moreover, we need to explore ways to incentivize the purchase of insurance coverage for individuals, much in the same way that employers are given tax incentives to provide insurance coverage. People need to have the freedom to shop for insurance products that fit their needs and the insurance market needs to have the motivation to offer these products. Changing the tax treatment will foster that. These decisions are best handled by a patient and their physician.

And just as I advocate for transparency in government, so do I advocate for transparency in healthcare costs. Just as taxpayers should know how state government spends your tax dollars, so should healthcare consumers know how much that care costs. I continue to support proposals that would require healthcare providers to disclose the prices of the services and procedures they provide. In doing so, we can continue to empower the consumer.

Another way that we are exploring ways of reining in the costs of healthcare is to provide employers and individuals portability, the ability to transfer your healthcare insurance from one job to the next, so that the fear of losing a job doesn't mean the fear of losing your healthcare.

I cannot stress enough that the solutions to the rising cost of healthcare rest in the hands of consumers and doctors — not politicians and bureaucrats in Madison. As the vast majority of jobs in Wisconsin are provided by small businesses, we need to continue to seek ways that allow them to stay competitive in a global marketplace and to retain the best employees in the world.



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KEEP IN TOUCH WITH STATE REPRESENTATIVE BILL KRAMER

Room 18 West
State Capitol
Post Office Box 8952
Madison, Wisconsin 53708

Phone
608-266-8580

Toll Free
888-534-0097

FAX
608-282-3697

Email:
Rep.Kramer@legis.wi.gov

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BILL KRAMER

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 97TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Over the last year — my first as your State Representative — it has been my privilege to represent your interests in the State Capitol in Madison. I've come to meet some wonderful people from our community and share in our collective concerns about the future.

As the day I started, and pledged to you last Spring, my focus continues to be growing our economy and weathering the anxiety that many of us have about uncertain times. I continue to believe that the best way to mitigate the challenges before us is to avoid increasing taxes on families, small businesses and seniors.

My goal as your representative in Madison has been to make government more responsive, more accountable, and less expensive. To that end, I have authored several proposals to make government smaller but smarter. But I also wanted to focus resources where they can have a real impact.

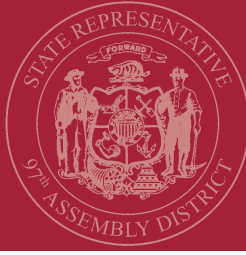
I've voted to send record amounts of aid to our schools, I've authored legislation that will make government more accountable, and worked with colleagues — both Republican and Democrat — to keep our communities safe and prosperous.

This past year has been an honor to work on your behalf in Madison. And as always, if you ever want to discuss an issue or express your concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Moving forward together, we can continue to make Waukesha one of the best places to live, work, raise a family, and retire.

Warmest regards,

Bill Kramer
97th Assembly District



State Representative **BILL KRAMER**

Protecting the Public and Your Right to Privacy

Protecting victims of abuse

Last year, I began working with State Senator Julie Lassa of Stevens Point on a proposal that would provide victims of elder abuse, child abuse, and harassment with immediate protection from their abusers in the courts.

All of us are all too familiar with the nightmare stories attendant to abuse. It was our aim to provide relief under the law to all victims, allowing for the protection by law enforcement the minute they sought protection in the courts. Under our proposal, victims would have the protection of a temporary restraining order the minute a judge issues it, versus the current situation where abusers will often avoid court appearances to avoid being issued the order and continue to abuse their victims.

AB 242/SB 124 passed by unanimous voice votes in the Republican-controlled Assembly and the Democrat-controlled Senate. The legislation was supported by law enforcement, district attorneys throughout the state, and groups that advocate on behalf of victims of domestic violence. Last month, Governor Doyle signed the bill into law.

Preventing stalking, protecting privacy rights

Along with a colleague representing Milwaukee's northwest side, I am working on a bill aimed at preventing persons who try to take advantage of the latest technology to harass and

stalk their victims. Currently, it is NOT unlawful for any person to monitor your whereabouts with a global positioning device — often found as a navigation system in vehicles or units that can easily be placed into a vehicle.

In most cases, the person being tracked is unaware that their movements are being monitored. This has become a problem with the advent and popularity of portable GPS units and too many stories have come out that they were being used to stalk or harass would-be victims.

To protect potential victims of this type of harassment, our legislation would make it a felony to place a unit onto, or to download information from, any vehicle that you do not own or control.

In other words, jealous boyfriends, ex-spouses, disgruntled employees, and frustrated neighbors would face severe criminal penalties for tracking your whereabouts with a GPS unit.

Of course we provided exceptions for law enforcement and business owners who have fleets of vehicles that need to keep track of the vehicles that they own.

Like any technological advance, GPS has been a blessing but also has the potential to be abused and used irresponsibly. It has helped millions of wayward motorists and countless sportsmen, and law enforcement has used it effectively to fight crime and keep the public safe. We should continue to encourage positive use of such technologies while doing everything we can to protect the privacy rights of our citizens.

Stewardship of Tax Dollars with the State Checkbook Disclosure Act

One of the most frustrating things to hear as a taxpayer are press accounts about a government that is wrought with waste and inefficiency.

Over the last several years we have heard story after story about government computer boondoggles that have cost taxpayers tens of millions of dollars because of inefficiency. We have been subjected to stories that describe government contracts that seem to go to the politically well-connected

for millions and millions of dollars. We hear regularly of stories about the use of tax dollars to pay for extravagant trips for government officials.

I have authored legislation that will create the first-ever database and website that tracks all expenditures by state government that exceed \$100. All contracts, grant applications and approvals, credit card bills, and invoices would be available online for taxpayers and the media to look at.

I believe that one of my responsibilities in the State Assembly is to be a good steward of your tax dollars. You work too hard to have government waste it. The database and website will allow you, the taxpayer, to see firsthand how Madison is spending your money and whether it is being spent wisely.

Just as families across Wisconsin and the country have to tighten their belts and reprioritize our spending, so should government. Disclosure will go a long way in that effort.

This legislation is similar to legislation that has passed in several other states and compliments the database and website that the federal government is required to maintain. The federal legislation was authored by Senators Barack Obama (D-IL) and Tom Coburn (R-Oklahoma) and has vastly improved the public's awareness of federal spending habits. It is my intent to emulate that success. That website can be found at <http://www.usaspending.gov/>.



Bill listens to testimony in Insurance Committee.

Giving Consumers a Break at the Pump; Repeal of the Minimum Markup Law

With the slowdown in the local economy, Waukesha area families are feeling the pinch as the price of everything from gas to bread, from computers to prescription drugs continues to rise.

Last summer, and then again in the weeks before Christmas, we learned that because of the same state law that mandates a price increase on gas also mandates that nearly all consumer goods — from stereo equipment and televisions to computers and prescription drugs — are artificially priced higher than in other states. Discount stores cannot offer the same low prices to Waukesha consumers as they do for their customers in Iowa and Illinois.

This Depression-era law hurts consumers and businesses alike.

Unfortunately, the burdens of this law fall heaviest on low and middle income families that already feel

the pinch from high taxes and an impending national economic slowdown.

I have co-authored, along with State Representative Leah Vukmir and Senator Tim Carpenter, legislation that will repeal the minimum markup law and instead allow businesses to vigorously compete for customers based on price, quality, and service while still providing protections for small retailers, the mom-and-pop businesses that line our Main Streets.

Many large retailers are already lining up to offer Wisconsinites \$4 prescription drugs, and computers several hundred dollars less than in neighboring states.

Since the current law requires a minimum price increase on gasoline, I am also hopeful that with this bill we can provide relief to Wisconsin motorists as well.



Bill meeting with constituents.

Ensuring the Integrity of Your Ballot on Election Day

Too many residents of our community have relayed their concerns to me about the integrity of the ballot box.

State Senator Ted Kanavas (R-Brookfield) and I have introduced legislation that would allow voters at the time of registration to request on Election Day that they be asked for their photo identification.

Recent legislative attempts to pass a photo identification requirement to vote have failed because opponents felt that it placed too onerous a burden on certain voters — the elderly, minorities, and the poor. Despite several attempts to reach a compromise on such concerns, the legislation always failed to garner enough support to become law.

Consequently, the legislation that we introduced is an effort to bridge those differences by placing the burden only on those voters who wish to be burdened.

This is yet another common-sense proposal that will help voters who feel disenfranchised to once again have faith in the election process and feel that their vote is secure from theft or fraud.



Hawthorne School's 4th Grade Classes

GOVERNMENT • PUBLIC SAFETY

ECONOMY • ELECTION INTEGRITY