



Visit the STATE CAPITOL

School groups are frequently visiting Tom at the Capitol. To schedule a tour, please call (608) 266-0382. Tom would love to address the group when you visit, so please call our office before your trip.



FOLLOW THE ACTION ON YOUR TV OR COMPUTER!

Watch floor session & committee hearings at the State Capitol or civic events and campaign programming by tuning in to **WisconsinEye** on television (Time Warner Channel 163 or Charter Cable Channel 200) or online at <http://www.wiseye.org>.



Watch Who We Are

HELPFUL NUMBERS

- Aging & Long Term Care(800) 242-1060
- Badger Rx Gold (Prescription Drugs) ... (866) 809-9382
- BadgerCare Insurance(800) 362-3002
- Consumer Protection(800) 422-7128
- Crime Victim Services(800) 446-6564
- EdVest College Savings Program(888) 338-3789
- Identity Theft Hotline(877) 438-4338
- Dept. of Revenue(414) 227-4000
- SeniorCare Insurance (Prescription Drugs)(800) 657-2038
- Social Security(800) 772-1213
- Telemarketing No Call List(866) 966-2255
- Tourism & Travel(800) 432-8747
- Unemployment Compensation(800) 494-4944

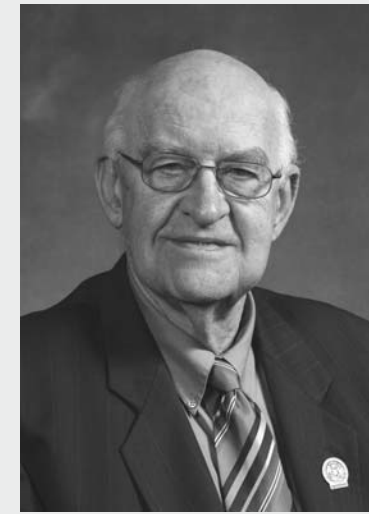


STATE REPRESENTATIVE

TOM LOTHIAN

2007-2008 Legislative Session Review

KEEP IN TOUCH!



THOMAS A. LOTHIAN
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

STATE CAPITOL:
PO Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708

Phone: (608) 266-1190
Fax: (608) 282-3632
Toll-Free: (888) 529-0032

DISTRICT:
539 Park Ridge Rd
Williams Bay, WI 53191

Rep.Lothian@legis.wi.gov



THOMAS A. LOTHIAN
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

32nd DISTRICT

Cities:

Delavan, Lake Geneva

Towns:

Bloomfield, Darien,
Delavan, Geneva, Linn,
Lyons, Sharon,
Walworth, Wheatland

Villages:

Darien, Fontana,
Genoa City, Sharon,
Walworth, Williams Bay

OFFICE:

306 North State Capitol
Post Office Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708

(608) 266-1190
Fax: (608) 282-3632
Toll-Free: (888) 529-0032
Rep.Lothian@legis.state.wi.us

District

539 Park Ridge Road
Williams Bay, WI 53191

Spring 2008

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

In 2002, when I first decided to run for the State Assembly, I made one promise to the people of the 32nd Assembly district: I would never support a tax increase. I am happy to once again state that I have fulfilled this promise.

This session, I have worked to fill two budget holes without increasing taxes. Making the tough decisions is never easy. Cutting a bloated government system is what is needed in order to get our state back on a stable fiscal path. Unfortunately, the Governor did not share my philosophy and instead decided to raise taxes by close to a billion dollars in our two year budget.

And now, the Governor is at it again, proposing a tax on hospitals as a way to fix our newest budget deficit. Once again, I have rejected this proposal and supported a budget repair bill that cuts government instead of increasing the tax burden of our overtaxed citizens.

Yet, our budget problems did not stop the Legislature from passing a number of important pieces of legislation ranging from providing choices for cable services to the protection of our promising virtual school system. Personally, I have continued to work on exempting pensions from taxation and protecting individuals from identity theft.

This newsletter is filled with a wide variety of issues that should interest you and your family. It includes legislation that I worked on in the Assembly, some of which was signed into law.

As always, it's an honor to represent you in the Wisconsin State Assembly.

Sincerely,

Tom Lothian
State Representative
32nd Assembly District



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

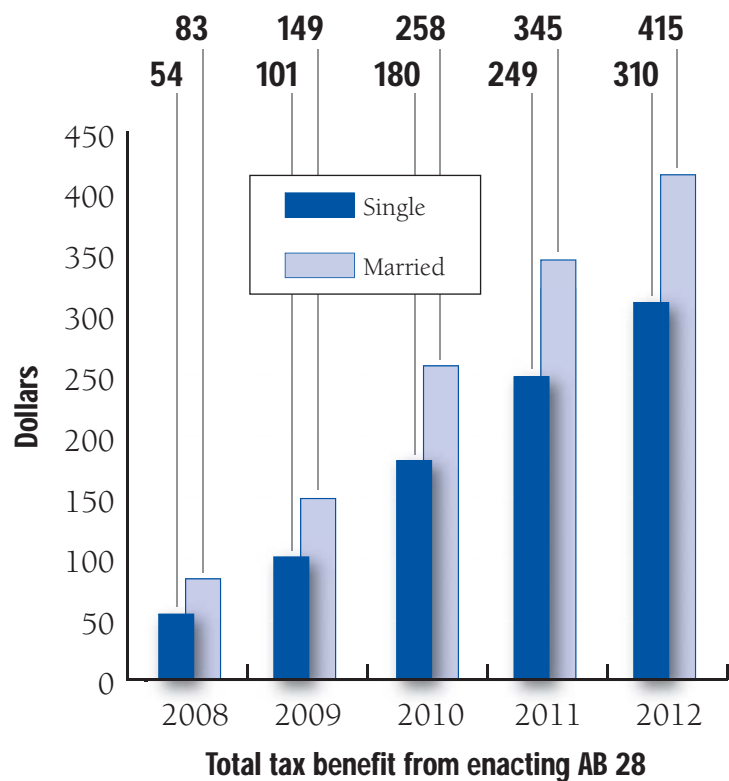
TOM LOTHIAN

2007-2008 Legislative Session Update

Exempting Retirement Income from Taxation

As our community shares a border with Illinois, I often hear from retirees who are moving out of the state to seek a better tax climate elsewhere. Retirees are some of the most valuable members of our community as they reinvest their retirement incomes into our local economy as well as serve our community as the volunteers in countless civic and charitable organizations. State Senator Neal Kedzie and I introduced Assembly Bill 28 (AB28) because we value these community-minded citizens.

AB 28 would phase in a tax exemption for all Internal Revenue Service approved retirement plan income. It would begin in tax year 2008 with the first \$2,500 of that plan's income and incrementally raise the exemption to the first \$20,000 of the retirement plan income in tax year 2012. It is estimated our plan would result in tax cuts of around \$400 million dollars for tens of thousands of retirees for tax year 2012.



Tom and Senator Kedzie testify before the Assembly Ways and Means Committee on their legislation to exempt retirement income from state taxation.

This legislation gives our senior citizens a chance to not only keep more of the money they've planned on using in their golden years, but keep them as Wisconsin residents where they can continue to contribute to our state's economy.

Last session, the Legislature made a good start by exempting Social Security income from state taxation. This session's State Budget created a \$5,000 tax exemption for retirement income for seniors making \$15,000 or less. While this exemption is a good start, Senator Kedzie and I will continue pushing forward our plan and it is my hope we can take this important step to help our retirees in the next session.



Tom addresses the Assembly Chambers during a recent floor session.

My Legislation

During the past session, there were three separate incidents in which state agencies sent out mailings with visible Social Security numbers to taxpayers. Being Chair of the Committee on Consumer Protection and Personal Privacy, I convened my committee to investigate what went wrong. The committee learned the error occurred largely due to the usage of Social Security numbers as the personal identification number in a government program. To attempt to fix this security nightmare, I introduced Assembly Bill 771 which aimed to eliminate this dangerous use of personal information. This legislation passed the State Assembly 95-0, but unfortunately was held up in the State Senate and never even received a vote.

State Senator Neal Kedzie and I were contacted by the Lake Geneva Wine Festival regarding their annual charitable wine auction. We introduced Senate Bill 545, which creates an exemption to the liquor license law, to allow charitable organizations to auction sealed bottles of wine, intoxicating liquor, and fermented malt beverages to raise money for charitable causes. It came to our attention that many charitable organizations in the state were already conducting these types of auctions, and enactment of SB 545 benefited these charities that were unknowingly violating current law. This bill was signed into law on April 7th.

The Death Tax is one of the most unfair taxes that can hit a grieving family. With this in mind, I supported and coauthored Assembly Bill 149, which would eliminate the 'Death Tax' in Wisconsin. When a



The Secretary of the Department of Revenue addresses Tom's Consumer Protection and Personal Privacy Committee about their security breach.

family member passes away and leaves behind their assets to their children, government should not have a right to a share of those monies. This situation can affect everyone and makes it difficult to keep a home or farm within the family. This becomes especially difficult in our area, as property values continue to skyrocket. It is my hope to eliminate this unfair tax so that longtime family owned property can continue to be passed on from generation to generation.

Other Notable Bills:

Frankenstein Veto: Last session, the Governor used his veto pen to eliminate 752 words in a section of the biennial budget, leaving 20 unrelated words. These words when pieced together gave an unelected bureaucrat the ability to spend over \$427 million. This unprecedented use of the veto pen to increase spending led to a constitutional amendment banning the procedure. With statewide passage on this April's ballot, no future governor will be able to take advantage of this abuse of power.

Governmental Accountability Board: This session began with the passage of legislation creating the Governmental Accountability

Board. This board combined both the Ethics and Elections board and is charged with investigating criminal and civil violations of the state's ethics, campaign finance and election laws.

Virtual Schools: Last year, a court case raised questions over the legality of Wisconsin's virtual school systems. These schools provide a public education for those students that do not fit into the typical bricks and mortar setting. Through a bi-partisan effort, this innovative educational option was allowed to continue and eventually expand.

Cable Choice: Studies have shown that creating a competitive marketplace for cable services will save consumers over \$149 million a year. This session, legislation was

signed into law that would facilitate the process of expanding cable services throughout the state. By allowing cable companies to negotiate one contract with the state instead of with individual municipalities, more cable options will open up for Wisconsin consumers.

State Budget: While I voted against the State Budget due to increases in taxes and excessive spending, there were a number of provisions that I support. Some of these provisions included making health insurance premiums deductible from the state income tax, tax breaks for child care expenses, increasing the tax deduction for college expenses, and the continuation of the property tax freeze.