



**The Nerison News**  
LEE NERISON  
96<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Spring 2008 Legislative Update

PO BOX 8953  
MADISON, WI 53708

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**2007-2008 Legislative Highlights**

Here are some of the things I worked on that you can read about inside this newsletter:

- ✓ **Your Ideas = New Laws!**
- ✓ **Investing in our Children**
- ✓ **Tax Relief for Families and Seniors**
- ✓ **Growing Western Wisconsin's Economy**
- ✓ **Better, More Affordable Health Care**

**Helpful Government Numbers**

Consumer Protection.....	800-422-7128
Insurance Complaints.....	800-236-8517
Dept. of Motor Vehicles.....	800-924-3570
Dept. of Revenue.....	608-266-2772
Dept. of Natural Resources (La Crosse office).....	608-785-9000
Dept. of Tourism.....	800-432-8747
Road Conditions.....	800-762-3947
Medicare.....	800-633-4227
Social Security.....	800-772-1213
SeniorCare Hotline.....	800-657-2038
Medigap Hotline.....	800-242-1060
BadgerCare Plus.....	800-362-3002

- Nerison Constituent Services**  
**Please contact me for help with:**
- Issues with state agencies such DNR or DOT
  - Cutting through government "red tape"
  - General questions about state government
  - Ideas for new legislation
  - Citations for achievements
  - Scheduling me to talk to groups

**Calendar of Community Events**  
**Save the date – I hope to see you there!**

June 6-7 .....	Kickapoo River Fest & Craft Fair – Viola
June 7-8 .....	Free Fishing Weekend (statewide)
June 10-13 .....	Crawford County Fair – Gays Mills
June 13-15 .....	Dairy Days – Soldiers Grove
June 14 .....	Cesky Den – Hillsboro
June 20-22 .....	Coon Creek Festival – Coon Valley
July 12 .....	Ridge & Valley Rally – Seneca
July 26 .....	River Bluff Daze – Ferryville
July 23-27 .....	Monroe County Fair – Tomah
Sept. 3-7 .....	Richland County Fair – Richland Center
Sept. 11-14 .....	Vernon County Fair – Viroqua
Sept. 20 .....	Horse & Colt Show – Viola
Sept. 27 .....	Hog Roast – Eastman
Sept. 27-28 .....	Apple Festival – Gays Mills
Dec. 31 .....	Drop-pin' of the Carp – Prairie du Chien

**LEE NERISON**  
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Rep.Nerison@legis.wi.gov

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96<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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**KEEP IN TOUCH WITH LEE**

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Madison, WI 53708-8953  
(608) 266-3534

**District Office:**  
S3035 County Highway B  
Westby, WI 54667  
(608) 634-4562

**E-mail:**  
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- LEE'S COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**
- Rural Affairs, Chair
  - Agriculture, Vice-Chair
  - Energy and Utilities
  - Natural Resources
  - Public Health

**Serving Crawford County, Vernon County, southern Monroe County, and western Richland County.**

**LEE NERISON**  
96<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

Thank you for the chance to talk to you about a few things I have been working on and for the opportunity to serve as your State Representative.

My top priority is to make western Wisconsin an even better place to live, work, raise a family, and retire. Every time I make a decision and take a vote, I remember how important it is to put your needs ahead of state government's wants.

Working together, we can make sure our hard-working families have access to quality, affordable health care and good jobs, our kids receive a top-notch education, and our seniors have the help they need to live independently.

While I write this, the Legislature is working to close a budget shortfall resulting from the state's economic slowdown. Just like our families need to do when times are tough, government needs to look at ways to cut spending while making sure our essential needs are met. As you've told me, it's important to not raise taxes and take more money out of your pockets to solve this shortfall.

In this newsletter, I have highlighted the progress we have made on many issues during the past year. But, there's always more that can be done, so please keep your ideas coming – your input is always appreciated.

I look forward to seeing you this summer at one of our many great community events!

Sincerely,

**Lee Nerison**  
State Representative  
96th Assembly District

*Lee's family at his second Inauguration.*



**Your Ideas Became New Laws!**

With the help of western Wisconsin residents, the following bills that I authored at their suggestions became law:

- **Grant Certain Hunting Permits to Military Personnel** – Act 19 thanks our service men and women for the sacrifices they make by allowing Wisconsin residents who are in active military service outside the state to obtain limited draw permits for turkey, deer, and goose hunting while home on furlough or leave, even if they missed a special application deadline.
- **Improve Disabled Parking Access** – Act 119 improves access to disabled parking permits or license plates by allowing public health nurses and podiatrists to sign the approval paperwork to receive them.
- **Prohibit Introductions of Feral Pigs** – Act 120 helps fight invasive species by designating feral pigs as “harmful wild animals.” This designation prohibits people from bringing feral pigs into the state and prevents new releases of them into the wild in order to protect our environment and agriculture from destruction.



*Governor Doyle signs Lee's disabled parking bill into law.*

**Nerison, Western Wisconsin Work Together for Flood Recovery**

What started out as a welcome rain on August 18, 2007, soon turned into a devastating flood that no one wanted. In the following days, I worked to get a federal disaster declaration from the President and went door-to-door with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Small Business Administration (SBA) assessment teams as our area started the process of rebuilding.

The financial assistance from FEMA and the SBA helped tremendously, but it doesn't compare to the helping hands of our friends and neighbors. On October 30, 2007, I nominated, and the State Assembly recognized, all the volunteers and emergency management staff from Crawford, Richland, and Vernon counties as “Hometown Heroes” for their efforts related to the August 2007 floods. I have

**Investing in our Children**

**School Aids, a Top Funding Priority** – Over the next two years, K-12 education will get the **largest increase in school aids in our state's history**, bringing the total allocation to \$12.3 billion statewide.

**Improving Student Achievement** – The SAGE Program aims to improve academic achievement in grades K-3. I worked to get \$26.7 million more to help area schools such as **Norwalk-Ontario-Wilton, Cashton, Hillsboro, Prairie du Chien and Seneca.**

**Helping our Area School Districts** – To help all of our school districts ease their budgets, I provided them with additional resources such as a **rate increase for transporting pupils more than 12 miles and \$3.2 million more for school breakfast programs.**

**Tracking Down Child Predators** – Working with Attorney General Van Hollen, I supported funding for investigators to track down internet sex predators. I strongly supported Project KidSafe, which provides **lifetime, 24/7 GPS monitoring for sex predators.**

witnessed so many ways that people helped out their neighbors in a time of need and every one of them earned this well-deserved honor.

As we continue with flood recovery, I am proud to have helped obtain \$2,186,100 in grants through the Wisconsin Department of Commerce to help folks in our area get back on their feet after this disaster.

**Better, More Affordable Health Care**

**Tax Deduction for Health Insurance Premiums** – When the ability to deduct health insurance premiums on state income taxes is fully implemented, **this tax break will put an extra \$150 million a year in the pockets of Wisconsin families.**

**Small Business Health Insurance Pool** – Just like we did for farmers and agribusinesses, I worked to **allow small businesses to purchase health insurance together at a price they can afford.**

**Health Care Co-ops for Farmers and Agribusinesses** – After working on revisions to the law that formed the successful Farmers Health Cooperative, I am thankful that **Mayo Health System providers are now included in the network** after many people in the area requested this addition.

**Helping Seniors Pay for High-Cost Prescriptions** – When SeniorCare, the program that helps seniors purchase medicines at low cost was in jeopardy last year, I fought to continue it to **make sure over 100,000 seniors can afford the medicines they need.**

**Health Care for Working Families** – The primary goal of BadgerCare Plus is to make sure that working families and pregnant women have access to affordable health care. I voted to expand this income-based fee program to **provide affordable health care to 98% of Wisconsin citizens.**

**Access to Cancer Screenings** – I supported the importance of increasing access to early detection of serious medical conditions by voting for an **additional \$300,000 for breast, cervical, and colon cancer screenings.**

**Tax Relief for Families and Seniors**

**Retirement Income Tax Cut** – Beginning next year, senior couples with incomes less than \$30,000 will be able to **exempt \$5,000 of retirement/pension income from their state taxes.**

**Helping Parents Pay for Child Care Expenses** – Parents already get a tax break from the IRS for child care expenses. Beginning next year, they can **deduct some child care expenses from their state taxes.**

**Holding the Line on Property Taxes** – Many homeowners, particularly seniors, are already paying too much in property taxes. Working together, we **renewed the Property Tax Freeze for another two years to help keep local property taxes in check.**

**Tax Relief for the Kickapoo Valley** – I worked with local elected officials to get the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center included in the state's payments to local governments for property tax relief. This equals **\$76,400 more in the next two years for the Town of Stark, the LaFarge School District, and surrounding communities.**

**\$500,000 to Restore Jersey Valley Lake** – My budget work provided \$500,000 for restoring this recreational area to what it once was, while **helping to ease the local taxpayers' costs.**



*Lee met with the Crawford County Farm Bureau members during Agriculture Day at the Capitol.*

**Growing Western Wisconsin's Economy**

**Our Technical Colleges: Key to Our Workforce** – Our local technical colleges like Western Technical College are vital to training a skilled workforce. I supported an **additional \$3 million to fund skills training or other education for local businesses.**

**Keeping our Local Agricultural Economy Strong** – We created a **new incentive to encourage local dairy farmers to modernize their operations** so that they can compete with farmers across the nation.

**Encourage Biodiesel Production** – With the rising costs of gas and fuel to heat our homes, it's time we look at alternative forms of energy. I led the charge to get **up to \$1 million in tax credits for biodiesel production at BEST BioDiesel in Cashton.**