



# STATE REPRESENTATIVE **CHUCK BENEDICT**

45TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT



September 18, 2009

Dear Neighbor,

I hope that you had an enjoyable and relaxing summer! As the fall season approaches and the Legislature begins its fall floor period, I want to take this opportunity to inform you of some very important issues and bills that we have been working on that will protect Wisconsin's roads from repeat drunk drivers, clean up State Supreme Court elections, help create green jobs, and restore independence to the DNR.

## **LEGISLATURE COMBATS DRUNK DRIVING IN WISCONSIN**

I am committed to protecting the public from drunk drivers by continuing to work on drunken driving reforms that will help keep people safe in their communities and on the road. The Assembly recently passed **Assembly Bill 283**, an omnibus package that will address this serious problem by:

- Toughening penalties – including making a 4<sup>th</sup> DWI offense a felony, extending license revocation, and increasing penalties for injuries.
- Taking on the root of the problem by providing prevention measures like mandatory ignition interlock for first time offenders with a blood alcohol level of 0.15, and individualized probation and treatment options for offenders.

## **BENEDICT SUPPORTS IMPARTIAL JUSTICE**

Earlier this year, we enacted a historic policy-change that prohibited legislator fundraising during the budget, to reform our government and our elections. **Assembly Bill 65**, also known as the Impartial Justice Bill, will clean up Supreme Court elections by providing public financing for State Supreme Court campaigns. The role that the special interest groups have played in State Supreme Court races has dramatically increased. A seat on the State Supreme Court should not be decided by money, but by the merits of the candidates.

I have always been a strong supporter of publicly financed campaigns, especially when we are talking about the non-partisan State Supreme Court races that have become increasingly nasty and expensive.

## **BENEDICT SUPPORTS GREEN JOBS AND ALTERNATIVE ENERGY**

As we know, in Rock County it is all about jobs, jobs, jobs. That is why it is of great importance to grow the new green economy and bring some of those jobs here. A number of business-boosting tax credits in the state budget and a number of initiatives to strengthen our workforce for the long term have already been passed in the Assembly. This week the Assembly passed important green legislation to address wind farm siting and create new jobs in Wisconsin.

**Assembly Bill 256** will streamline wind energy policy to unleash its true potential. This is a vital step in breaking stalemates on wind projects across the state so we can realize this green industry's potential to:

- Grow the state's green industry sector, creating family-supporting jobs.
- Attract new companies to Wisconsin.
- Protect our environment.

It is also crucial to invest in the green jobs economy. Legislation from Rep. Ted Zigmunt (D-Francis Creek) would allow alternative renewable energy resources to be used to fulfill a utility's renewable resources requirement. This measure will:

- Spur the kind of renewable energy innovation we need to create new family-supporting jobs in Wisconsin, like Orion Energy is doing right now.
- Reduce carbon emissions, making the air we breathe cleaner.
- Make energy bills more manageable for working families.
- Reduce energy costs for Wisconsin businesses to make them more competitive.

## **KEEPING POLITICS OUT OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES**

It is imperative that we protect Wisconsin's outdoor heritage for the good of the people who enjoy our pristine places and for our tourism economy. **Assembly Bill 138** will return an independent Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

The DNR Secretary plays an important role in deciding the rules and regulations that govern our natural spaces and how people enjoy them. We must take steps that will take the politics out of these decisions. For 70 years, a citizen-based Natural Resources Board, the people who see DNR regulations in practice everyday, chose the DNR Secretary. We need to return to that model.

## **BENEDICT TO PARTICIPATE IN PANEL DISCUSSION ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM**

I am pleased to tell you that I will be participating in a panel discussion on campaign finance reform that is sponsored by Common Cause in Wisconsin. The public forum is open to the public and I hope that if you have time that you will join me and a number of other state legislators to discuss cleaning up campaigns in Wisconsin.

**The event will be held this Monday, September 21<sup>st</sup> from 6:30-8:00PM at the Educational Services Center – School District of Janesville, 527 S Franklin St in Janesville.**

**2009-10 BLUE BOOKS ARE HERE**

The 2009-10 State of Wisconsin Blue Books are now available! These books are free of charge and contain a wealth of information about Wisconsin history and government. If you are interested in receiving a Blue Book from my office, please just send me an email with your name and home mailing address and one will be sent to you.

I am looking forward to an active fall floor session and as always, I look forward to hearing your views and suggestions on issues facing Wisconsin and any other issue that may be of importance to you. Please feel free to forward this newsletter to other interested persons. If they would like to join my growing list, they can simply send an email to me at [Rep.Benedict@legis.wi.gov](mailto:Rep.Benedict@legis.wi.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "CBenedict". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "C" at the beginning.

CHUCK BENEDICT  
State Representative  
45<sup>th</sup> Assembly District