



BRETT DAVIS

2009–2010 Legislative Session Update



KEEP IN TOUCH

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Brett's Committees in the State Assembly

- Education (*Ranking Republican*)
- Financial Institutions
- Rural Economic Development
- Renewable Energy
and Rural Affairs

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The 2009-2010 legislative session is now complete, and I wanted to share with you what has been going on in the state legislature and what my priorities have been this session.

One thing is clear—the past two years have been challenging for our state and our nation. My efforts in the State Assembly during this last legislative session have been focused on economic recovery, improving Wisconsin's job creation climate, reducing the tax burden faced by families and small businesses, and strengthening education.

The biennial state budget process was challenging, as our state faced record deficits in the billions due to expanding government programs and spending as well as irresponsible accounting practices used in prior years. The Democratic majority in both houses passed Governor Doyle's budget without considering any of the over 100 amendments and suggestions on the Republican side of the aisle. In the end, I voted against the state budget, which increased spending by over 6%, raised taxes by over \$3 billion, and included many harmful non-fiscal policies.

However, I did author and support multiple measures designed to create jobs, reduce the tax burden, cut out wasteful government spending, and improve K-12 education. Although many of the bills did not pass the Democratic controlled Legislature, I am hopeful many of these ideas can be approved in the next session.

Finally, in an effort to save taxpayer dollars, my end of session newsletter is going to be distributed exclusively electronically. It will be available online for anyone to view at www.brettdavis.us.

Thank you for taking the time to read this legislative update. As many of you know, I will not be seeking re-election and wanted to let you know that I have appreciated hearing from so many of you. Helping area residents has been the highlight of my time in the legislature and it has been an honor to serve as your State Representative in the Wisconsin State Assembly.

Sincerely,

Brett Davis
State Representative
80th District



**Serving All of Green County & Portions
of Rock, Dane & Lafayette Counties.**



BRETT DAVIS

2009-10 STATE BUDGET

Gov. Doyle's State Budget Puts Wisconsin on the Wrong Track

The 2009-10 legislative session began with consideration of the biennial state budget, which is one of the most significant bills the legislature votes on. Introduced by Governor Doyle, the state budget bill was a disaster for Wisconsin's small businesses and families, which I vigorously opposed and voted against.

To begin, in February 2009 the Democratic majorities in both the Assembly and Senate rammed through a "budget repair" bill with little public input and less than 48 hours notice. Included as part of the \$1.21 billion in tax and fee increases was a provision called combined reporting, which is a tax increase on certain businesses. As a result of this new tax Harley Davidson, a Wisconsin institution since 1903, recently announced they are considering moving their plants and 1,400 jobs to different states with friendlier business climates. Clearly we cannot afford another economic blow like this, so I continue to call for the repeal of this job-killing tax.

In addition to the budget repair bill, Governor Doyle introduced his regular biennial budget bill, which was full of even more harmful tax increases and non-fiscal policy.

The budget bill contained many harmful provisions, which I opposed and fought against. Listed below are some of the most destructive parts of the budget:

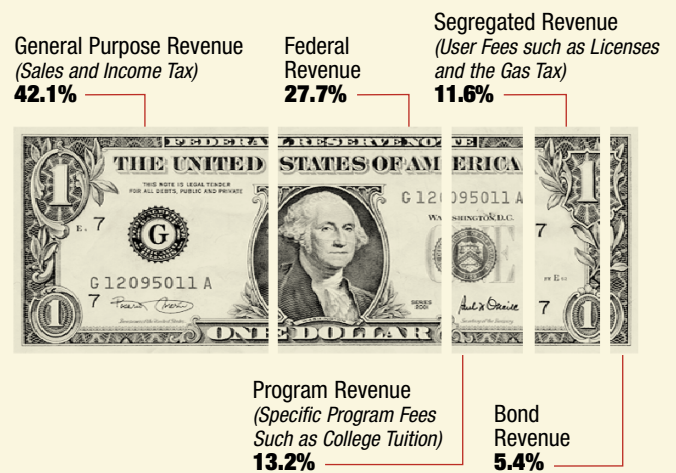
- 6% increase in government spending
- Over \$3 billion in tax and fee increases
- \$1.5 billion property tax increase
- Billions in borrowing and millions in fund raids
- Spending of one-time federal stimulus money for continuing costs and new programs
- On-going deficit of over \$2 billion
- Cuts to K-12 education of over \$500 million
- Harmful non-fiscal policies such as prevailing wage mandates on local governments and mandates that increased the auto insurance premiums

I opposed the budget because families and small businesses across the state cannot afford to send so much of their hard earned money to the government in Madison. Simply expanding the size of government and increasing taxes will not put Wisconsin's economy on the road to recovery. In fact, the reason

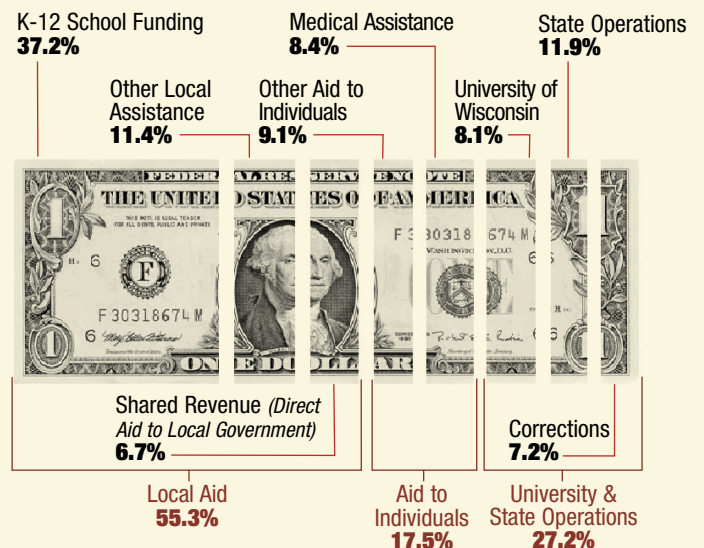
our state and nation are in such poor financial shape is due to out of control spending and poor budgeting in years past. Much of the rest of the legislative session resulted in the push to repeal many of the provisions contained in the massive budget bill.

Tracking Your Tax Dollar

A breakdown of where each tax dollar comes from...



A breakdown of how each tax dollar was spent...





BRETT DAVIS

Promoting Economic Development and Job Creation

The difficult economic recession has resulted in hard times for area families and individuals. Therefore, one of my top priorities during the past legislative session has been focusing on ways to boost the economy and create jobs.

Part of the solution must include three core principles: reducing the tax burden, lessening burdensome regulations, and improving our litigation environment. After Forbes Magazine ranking Wisconsin as having the third worst business climate in the nation, it is clear that government must get out of the way and give businesses the tools they need to create jobs. Therefore, Republicans in the State Assembly developed and introduced a jobs-focused package known as the WI Jobs NOW Agenda.

Wisconsin Jobs NOW Agenda

- **Jobs Tax Credit**

AB 477 *Cosponsored by Rep. Davis*

The tax credit was included in the state budget but is not scheduled to go into effect until next year and cannot be claimed until 2012. We can't wait that long to create jobs, so this bill moves up the start date to provide businesses with an incentive to create jobs immediately;

- **Recruit & Retain Jobs**

AB 476 *Cosponsored by Rep. Davis*

This bill requires the Dept. of Commerce to report on steps it is taking to retain jobs, attract new jobs to Wisconsin, and respond quickly and strongly to businesses looking to relocate. This was included in the state budget by Republicans, but was vetoed by Governor Doyle;

- **Eliminate Budget Tax Increases**

AB 478 *Cosponsored by Rep. Davis*

This provision would eliminate the \$107 million phone tax, \$242 million capital gains tax on individuals' savings & investments, and the new \$215 million combined reporting tax on job-creators. The combined reporting tax alone has been cited by multiple Wisconsin companies, such as Harley Davidson, Thomas Industries, and Briggs & Stratton as a contributing factor in cutting hundreds of jobs and moving jobs out of the state.

It was extremely disappointing that none of these bills were passed by the legislature. By targeting job-killing tax increases for elimination, removing red tape, and pushing up the

effective date of tax credits, we could have achieved the goal of keeping jobs in Wisconsin and rebuilding our economy for the 21st century.

Additional Legislation Authored By Rep. Davis

- **Small Business Regulatory Reform**

AB 799 *Authored by Rep. Davis*

I drafted this bill along with Rep. John Nygren (R-Marinette), which would make changes to the Small Business Regulatory Review Board. The goal of this legislation is to increase cooperation between small businesses and the government agencies that regulate them, so that Wisconsin will be in a better position to create jobs and grow our existing small employers.

- **Repealing the Capital Gains Tax Increase**

AB 866 *Authored by Rep. Davis*

This legislation would eliminate the tax increases passed in the state budget relating to capital gains, which would make Wisconsin a more attractive place to do business. By rewarding investment success, we can give an incentive for businesses to create jobs.



Rep. Davis speaks on the floor of the State Assembly urging for passage of the Jobs NOW legislation package.



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Fighting for Lower Taxes, Honest Budgeting, and Smaller Government

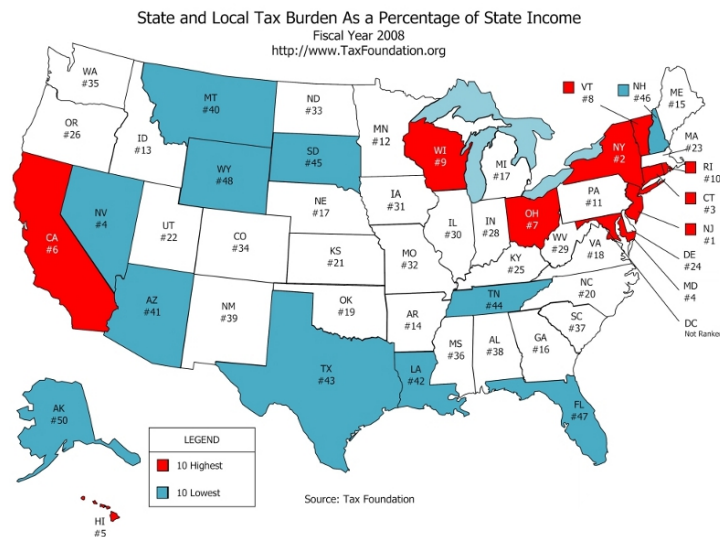
With record deficits at both the state and national level, it is clear that government spending in Madison and Washington is out of control. According to the Tax Foundation, the most recent data from 2008 puts Wisconsin back in the top 10 most taxed states in the country. When the Democrat-led tax increases from this session are figured in, we will surely be moving closer to number 1. This needs to change immediately, and I believe strongly that in order for our state to be prosperous again, we need to reduce the size of government by lowering the tax burden and implementing honest budgeting.

- **Truth in Budgeting Act**

AB 127 Authored by Rep. Davis

Under current law, various budgeting gimmicks, such as lapses from segregated funds, are used to “balance” the state’s budget. This has resulted in a deficit in the billions, which if measured by personal income and population, ranks Wisconsin’s deficit as the largest in the country for our size.

Therefore I have co-authored the Truth in Budgeting Act, which would ensure balanced and honest budgeting practices by requiring the state budget to be prepared according to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). The bill would also implement zero-based budgeting by requiring agencies to prepare their budgets starting at zero, and justify each component on the basis of cost, need, and relation to statutory responsibilities.



Joined by Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker and Rep. Tom Lothian (R-Williams Bay), Rep. Davis unveils legislation to stop the costly train from Madison to Milwaukee.

- **Stopping the Expensive Madison to Milwaukee Train**

AB 960 Authored by Rep. Davis

With a round-trip ticket expected to cost \$60, the proposed high-speed train from Madison to Milwaukee is not a reasonable transportation option. The train would have to be subsidized by least \$10 million per year by state taxpayers and would suck much-needed funds out of the state’s transportation fund needed for local roads and regional highway systems.

- **Exempting Retirement Income**

AB 967 Authored by Rep. Davis

Many retiring seniors in Wisconsin want to remain here to be close to their families, but the current high tax burden is forcing them to consider moving to other states. Specifically, this bill would exempt all retirement income from state income taxes, regardless of age or federal adjusted gross income.



BRETT DAVIS

Protecting Your Freedoms & Rights

• Health Care Freedom Amendment

AJR 138 Authored by Rep. Davis

After Washington forced Government-run health care through the legislative process, I joined an effort to exempt Wisconsin from the law. This amendment would preserve the right of every Wisconsin citizen to make their own health care and health insurance purchasing decisions.

• Protecting 2nd Amendment Rights

AB 193 Co-sponsored by Rep. Davis

The Castle Doctrine would have established the presumption of self defense in cases where a person was forced to defend their home against intruders, this bill passed the Assembly but unfortunately died in the Senate.

• Preserving Integrity at the Ballot Box

AB 947 Co-sponsored by Rep. Davis

I continue to support the requirement to show ID to vote. Additionally, I fought against AB 751 & 895, which would have made sweeping and harmful changes to the election system in our



Brett announces his ideas on K-12 education reform at a press conference at the State Capitol.

state that would have certainly led to increased voter fraud. The bills would have skewed the founding father's vision of the electoral college and allow the government to share private information on voters with third party groups such as ACORN.

Reforming Education

As the ranking Republican member on the Education Committee, ensuring Wisconsin's students have high-quality schools while protecting taxpayers, has been a top interest of mine.

• School Finance Reform

AB 919 Authored by Rep. Davis

This bill is designed to create a sustainable school finance system that will ensure we are appropriately investing in our students while protecting taxpayers.

• Rewarding Our Best Teachers

AB 538 Authored by Rep. Davis

By implementing a Merit Pay system, we can recognize and reward our top educators.

• Eliminating the Virtual School Cap

AB 306 Authored by Rep. Davis

For certain students, virtual schools have proven to be a high-quality and cost-effective alternative to traditional brick and mortar schools.

• Education Investment Tax Credit

AB 941 Authored by Rep. Davis

Modeled after a highly successful program in Florida, this bill would create a tax credit to encourage businesses to donate funds to be used as scholarships to offset education costs for certain students who need financial aid.

Additional Bills Authored by Rep. Davis

• Rejecting the Pay Raise

AJR 32 Authored by Rep. Davis

I rejected my pay raise this year and instead gave the money back to the taxpayers. In tough economic times, it is not right for your elected officials to accept a pay raise. Additionally, I authored a bill that would allow future pay raises to be rejected more easily.

• Fran's Law

AB 351 Authored by Rep. Davis

I was approached by a local family in our area who lost their mother (and grandmother) in a horrific drunk driving accident. The drunk driver crashed into her home as she was sleeping and killed her. However, the driver was not charged with hit-and-run because of a loophole in state statute. Therefore, I offered a bill to close this loophole and it was signed into law by Governor Doyle.



The Scheller family joins Rep. Davis on the floor as Fran's Law is passed by the State Assembly.