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STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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### **Rep. Gary Hebl's 2020 Priorities**

The holiday season is here and a new year is just around the corner. As we prepare to enter 2020, many are preparing to meet new goals and to focus on new priorities. State legislators would do well to try the same approach. For almost a decade those in power in Wisconsin have refused to prioritize our citizens but rather catered to the interests of corporations and deep pocketed political donors. Fortunately, Governor Evers has begun to right the course and focus on issues that positively impact the residents of our great state. Hopefully, the leadership of the State Assembly and State Senate will follow suit. Despite opposition from GOP leadership, I remain committed to fighting for issues that most Wisconsinites favor. Here are my priorities for the New Year.

#### 1. Education

- Governor Evers' budget had historic investments in public education. Unfortunately, a lot of his budget was gutted by the GOP leaders on the finance committee. While having an educator as state executive has helped shift how we think about education in the state, there is more work to do. Education is the key to Wisconsin's future. It will remain my #1 issue moving forward.

#### 2. Environment

- After 8 years of being pushed onto the back burner, we are seeing protection of our environment become a priority once again. Historically, Wisconsin has been at the forefront of effective environmental protection but has lagged over the last eight years. In fact, over the last decade, Wisconsin was the "top" state in cuts to pollution control and cleanup. This is simply not sustainable. I will work to strengthen environmental protections once again so we can fight back against pollution and climate change and ensure that our children and grandchildren have healthy and safe water and air.

#### 3. Health Care

- We must ensure that Wisconsin citizens have affordable health care. That means, among other measures, that we must accept the Medicaid expansion, which could cover 274,000 Wisconsin residents. It is more important than ever to make sure that the people of Wisconsin have some measure of confidence that they will be able to receive the care they need. We must also do more to address the cost of life saving medication, such as insulin. I will fight to expand Medicaid and to continually ensure affordable healthcare for all Wisconsin residents.

#### 4. Voting Rights

- Voting is an American's most fundamental right, and it has been under attack from the other side of the aisle. We have seen some of the most underhanded techniques employed recently, from hyper-partisan gerrymandering to restrictive voter ID laws, to help one political party maintain power. This includes a recent ruling that will purge hundreds of thousands of voters from the voter rolls, primarily in Democratic-leaning areas. We should want more people voting, not fewer. In the coming years we need to have non-partisan redistricting put into place, and we must repeal suppressive Voter ID laws. Other positive steps for voting rights also include automatic voter registration and expanding early voting hours. I will strive to make it easier for Wisconsin residents to vote to ensure that elections truly represent the will of the majority.

It would be a very difficult task to get all those things done in 2020. For starters, I do not believe that GOP leadership will be holding too many session days next year. They are eager to begin campaigning, which they are much more comfortable doing when compared to legislating. They have been so used to one party rule that this session has been a bit of a gut check for them. Unfortunately, they don't see compromise as the solution to split party rule. Instead they will be pouring all their resources into creating a veto-proof majority so that they can continue to push their unpopular ideas on the people of Wisconsin. Therefore, these must be long-term goals, until the opposite party learns to compromise or until they are swept out of office.

Regardless of what future elections may bring, I am eager to put partisanship aside and to work with my colleagues across the aisle to try to find genuine solutions to the problems we face. Negotiation and compromise have become vilified by those who seek out ideological purity. I disagree wholeheartedly. Compromise and negotiation are what adults do to solve problems. I have lived and worked in Wisconsin my whole life. Every day I meet people with different political viewpoints, and I find there is much more that we hold in common than what the current political atmosphere would lead us to believe. When we remove ourselves from political grandstanding, we find that we are neighbors. Neighbors band together and find solutions to problems they face. They don't ignore their neighbors in need to score cheap political points. For the greater good of all Wisconsin residents, this burgeoning hyper-partisanship must stop. I resolve in the New Year to work for the people of the 46<sup>th</sup> Assembly District and the people of Wisconsin.

I hope that everyone has a safe and holiday season, and that you spend time with the people you love and the things that make you happy!

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