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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Child fatality in Plainfield a terrible tragedy that must not be repeated

NEKOOSA – Representative Scott Krug (R-Nekoosa) expresses his condolences to the family of the Tri-County kindergartener student whose life was taken this past Monday by an inattentive driver near Plainfield.

“This is a tragedy that could have been prevented,” Krug noted. “I am a parent myself and I know the loss felt by this family has to be immense.”

A report by the Waushara Argus on February 10 indicated that a school bus was stopped outside Plainfield that morning when a driver struck two children who were apparently waiting for the bus: the six-year-old who was killed, and a sibling of that child who was also injured.

“The Wisconsin State Patrol is investigating what happened, and we need to let that process play out,” Rep. Krug noted. At the same time, he said, “Our children deserve to receive an education in a safe environment, and that includes their daily travel to and from their schools.”

Krug expressed concern that driver distraction may be an issue in this case. “It’s on all of us to always drive in control, and be particularly alert when in a school zone or near a school bus.”

Krug added that “Inattentive driving cannot be tolerated and the driver at fault must be held accountable.”

A common cause of inattentive driving is texting or emailing on a mobile phone by a driver. Some accidents are caused in part by drivers who exceed their capabilities: Drivers driving when they may be impaired by fatigue, alcohol or other drugs, or failing eyesight.

“The investigation is continuing,” Rep. Krug noted, adding “I don’t think all the usual causes of accidents are likely to have played a part here, but when the cause is determined, I want to review the case and determine if we can discourage and prevent more senseless deaths like this one.”

Other causes of accidents on the road include bad weather, and in some cases drivers driving too fast for conditions. “You can’t legislate the weather,” Krug acknowledged, but “Maybe we need to work on driver education for dealing with the challenges of fog and ice. It’s all worth a look.”

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“I think the real story of the driver is that he needed to slow down even more because conditions were bad. Or not go drive in conditions beyond his abilities. We all take that responsibility on when we get behind the wheel.”

“This child and her family deserved better. This this child is gone. This little girl had her own goals, her parents their dreams for her life. Her school plays, her basketball games or volleyball or whatever, dance classes, high school dances, boyfriends, broken hearts, wedding, future children, ALL GONE. We can all help prevent this from happening every time we drive. Our challenges as lawmakers is to see what the state can do to educate drivers and when necessary to reduce drivers’ operating privileges when a driver is involved in such an incident.”

Krug concluded by saying again that an investigation is ongoing and that he will be reviewing the results of the investigation with an eye toward action by the DOT and the legislature in this area.

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