

# Rep. Schraa: Amendment to delete State Treasurer passes

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**(Madison, WI)** Representative Michael Schraa (R-Oshkosh) and Sen. Dan Feyen (R-Fond du Lac) authored a Constitutional Amendment to delete the office of State Treasurer. Senate Joint Resolution 3 passed the Senate on Tuesday, March 7, and passed the Assembly in a bipartisan manner today. This is the second consideration of the resolution, which will now go to the voters in an April, 2018, referendum.

“This amendment is in line with our efforts to make Wisconsin government more streamlined and efficient,” said Rep. Schraa. “Since the main duties of the treasurer are now fulfilled by state agencies, it only makes sense to eliminate the unnecessary expense of this office.”

Schraa notes that both the current and previous State Treasurers ran on the platform of eliminating the office.

Some have expressed a concern that the amendment would remove the important role of checks and balances to the executive branch of government. He acknowledges that this is a valid concern, however “To my way of thinking, the nonpartisan agencies and 132 legislators are the ultimate in the way of checks and balances to occur.”

When the Constitution of Wisconsin was ratified, the Treasurer was a powerful and necessary position because of the nature of the financial transactions of the day. With modern electronic banking and accounting, that is no longer the case. The Department of Revenue handles receipts, and the Department of Administration

manages the payments. These are now just administrative functions, which are subject to careful agency and legislative oversight. A partisan elected position and full staff are just not the way we do business in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The Treasurer formerly oversaw the Unclaimed Property program, which is now handled more efficiently by the Department of Revenue. The only remaining duty is to sit on the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL), a duty that can be fulfilled with two 15-minute phone calls per month. This duty will be re-assigned to the Lieutenant Governor under this amendment.

“I have a deep respect for the Constitution, and I appreciate that the process takes significant time and consideration. Now it’s up to the voters.”