

Rep. Hebl: 2022 New Year's resolutions for Wisconsin

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A lot has happened over the course of the last twelve months. As we wrap up 2021 and look to 2022, I think it's appropriate to consider what we in Wisconsin should focus on in 2022. These New Year's resolutions will help move Wisconsin forward and benefit the people of our state:

1. Strengthen democracy

- We have seen numerous attempts to undermine American democracy this year, from a presidential administration searching for ways to overturn an election, to an insurrection trying to accomplish the same, to false claims of wide scale voter fraud, to Republican-controlled state legislatures (including Wisconsin's) attempting to strengthen their positions by both gerrymandering and restricting voting rights. America is in a precarious position, and we need brave people who will stand up and say they will no longer accept these attacks on our democracy. We also need brave Republican legislators who will stand up to their party's attempts to subvert the will of the voters.

2. Stop wasting taxpayer money

- Piggybacking off of #1, Wisconsin needs the legislative leaders to stop wasting money on a fruitless "investigation" of the 2020 elections. It has been over a year, and again and again no widespread issues have been found with Wisconsin's elections. From the beginning of this sham Gableman investigation, it has been clear that the goal is to undermine confidence in the election system. Luckily, Gableman has done such a bumbling, incompetent job, I don't think the goal has succeeded. Regardless, this charade must end

before Speaker Robin Vos throws anymore taxpayer money at it.

3. Support and fund public education

- Our future is our children and education is their greatest tool for success. We must ensure that our public education system is strong and teaching our students the critical thinking skills that they will require to succeed in a rapid transforming world. That starts with ensuring that we are able to retain quality teachers and maintaining facilities in which to learn.

4. Expand BadgerCare

- We have an opportunity to let tens of thousands of Wisconsinites receive BadgerCare but are currently refusing to do so because the Republicans in power are upset that national Democrats passed Mitt Romney's health care plan over a decade ago. The intransigence is appalling, and we are letting some of our fellow citizens go without healthcare because of a few Republicans' partisan games.

5. Fight back against climate change

- Wisconsin Democrats recently released a 22-bill package that would start to push back against climate change. Something must be done- and Democrats are willing and ready to face the challenge. Unfortunately, it was dismissed as "pandering" and not "serious" by Speaker Vos, a corporate politician who has a vested interest in blocking climate legislation. But we only have one planet, and we- as legislators and citizens- have a duty to protect it so that future generations aren't harmed by our inaction.

6. Care about someone you've never met

- This is something I think everyone should do in 2022. More often than not, we are surrounded by unfamiliar faces- but that doesn't mean we shouldn't do our best to be kind to our neighbors. Something as simple as wearing a mask in a store can help protect others.

7. Get boosted!

- Here's an easy thing to do- go get your COVID-19 booster! Getting a booster shot is safe and can increase your protection against serious complications from COVID-19. Keep yourself safe in 2022!

Rethinking Wisconsin's priorities is desperately needed in a rapidly changing world. Today's society is incredibly different today than it was two years ago; imagine what it might be like in another five or ten years. We cannot maintain the course that keeps us stuck in the thinking of a decade ago. I think if Wisconsinites, especially Wisconsin legislators, can try to do a couple of these New Year's resolutions, Wisconsin would be on the path to success for years to come.