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Rep. Hebl: Retired Dane County deputy receives Assembly Hometown Hero award

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(MADISON) – Wisconsin State Representative Gary Hebl (D-Sun Prairie) awarded the 46th Assembly District's "Hometown Hero" award to retired sheriff's deputy Eric Novotny of Stoughton for his notable service ensuring the safety of motorists in Dane County.

Novotny can be credited with the launch of the Dane County Beltline Patrol Program, which has assisted and provided service to thousands of stranded motorists over the span of twenty years.

While working for the free-of-charge program, Novotny has become a beloved loved figure in Dane County, showing up to help motorists in need. The nickname "Beltline Bob" was intended to refer more generally to the roadside program as a whole, but managed to stick to Novotny due to his constant presence helping Dane County drivers.

"Without a doubt, Eric deserves this award," Hebl said. "Ask anyone in Dane County if they know Beltline Bob. I think their response in itself is telling of his character."

Novotny, along with his partners, put roughly 1.2 million miles on five different trucks during his years monitoring the Beltline. Working 6am – 2pm shifts, Novotny ensured the highway was clear and traffic was able to flow following an accident or road blockage.

"Eric's dedication to the program is a true display of heroism making him a worthy candidate of the award. Getting rid of traffic jams is a plus too," finished Hebl.

Novotny retired in September after working for the Dane County Sheriff’s office for thirty years overall.