

Rep. Shankland: The will of the people should be the law of the land

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Special Session on Constitutional Amendment to Establish Binding Citizen Referenda Process Gaveled Out Immediately

MADISON – Today, Republican leadership in the Wisconsin State Legislature gaveled in and immediately out of a special session to discuss creating a pathway for voters to enact statewide changes via binding referenda in Wisconsin. This is the eleventh special session, of twelve called by Governor Evers, that has been gaveled in and gaveled out without any legislative action taken.

Representative Katrina Shankland (D- Stevens Point) released the following statement in response:

“The people of Wisconsin deserve to have their voices heard and trust that their legislators will thoughtfully discuss the topics that are important to them. Ultimately, the will of the people should be the law of the land. Yet today, Republican legislative leaders chose to double down on preserving their ability to block policies they don’t agree with without discussion rather than engaging in meaningful debate. We had the opportunity to discuss a constitutional amendment to empower the people of Wisconsin to make lasting changes in our state via binding ballot referenda, something that would very likely receive bipartisan support in other circumstances. Unfortunately, this opportunity was squandered.

“It’s our fundamental responsibility as legislators to listen and be responsive to those we represent. It’s frustrating to see how often the will of the people in Wisconsin is ignored and overridden by a few politicians who squander their power instead of sharing it. Giving the people the power to enact changes that are broadly supported, like overturning our state’s 1849 criminal abortion ban that could jail

medical providers, should not be a difficult or even controversial debate. At a minimum, we should *have* a debate. Our state legislators should be ready to work together on behalf of the people, and I will continue to listen carefully, debate thoughtfully, and serve as a resource to my constituents, advancing the policies that matter to our community.”