

Repr. Wichgers: Votes “no for now” on shared revenue

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Madison – The State Assembly voted late Wednesday on shared revenue; legislation that addresses the historical underfunding of local governments is long overdue. Shared revenue is the amount of state tax dollars that are sent back to Wisconsin counties and municipalities – cities, towns and villages.

Representative Chuck Wichgers issued the following statement:

“Over the last 20 years, state aid for fire, police, and other critical services, as well as infrastructure, has steadily declined. State sales and income tax revenues have tripled in the last 30 years, however the share of those taxes going to support local services has decreased, meaning that communities need to rely on property taxes to maintain essential services. Solving this problem – a problem that faces both rural and urban areas has been a challenge and doing so will require the agreement of the Assembly, the state Senate and the Governor. We are not yet there. That is why I cast a no vote on this bill. This vote, however, does not ignore that we are making great strides toward a solution and my vote is simply – no for now.

We received the substitute amendment late this afternoon and were asked to vote on the multi- faceted proposal. That is not enough time to hear from stakeholders like the League of Wisconsin

Municipalities and examine potential loopholes. One loophole allows Milwaukee to use a sales tax increase to fund other items besides pensions – the major reason for a local option sales tax in Milwaukee.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Assembly and the Senate over the next few days to solve the deficiencies or unintended consequences that

depreciate taxpayers' return on investment. We need to make sure that shared revenue reform does what it proposes to do - funds local critical needs for cities, villages, and towns - and nothing more."