

Brist campaign: Army veteran Ben Brist announces campaign for Wisconsin's 61st Assembly District

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Greendale, Wisconsin — Ben Brist, a U.S. Army veteran and sixth-generation Wisconsinite, announced today that he is running as a Democrat for the Wisconsin State Assembly in the 61st District.

“When you’re digging a foxhole, it doesn’t matter what your politics are, the color of your skin, or by what name you call God,” Brist said. “What matters is that you’re bound together by a common purpose, one of selfless service and teamwork to accomplish the mission. That’s the kind of leadership I want to bring to Madison: practical, accountable, and focused on results for our community.”

Brist served seven years on active duty as an Infantry Officer and Paratrooper in the U.S. Army, leading soldiers from across the country. A graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, Brist deployed to Iraq before returning home to Wisconsin with his wife to start a family.

Brist grew up in a family that believed in public service. Both of his parents were career public servants and union members who taught him the dignity of work and the importance of standing together to build strong communities.

“We chose to build our life here because we believe in Southeast Wisconsin. The 61st Assembly District is rich in history, full of hard working people and strong schools – this is a community worth investing in,” Brist said. “But for too long, the state government has made it harder, not easier, for young families like ours to stay and build a future in Wisconsin.”

The challenges hit close to home for Brist and his wife. Property taxes in Wisconsin are among the highest in the country. Young families struggle to afford childcare and housing. And despite Wisconsin's proud tradition of public service, the state legislature has slashed funding for schools, gutted the DNR, and closed Veterans Homeless Shelters in Green Bay and Eau Claire.

"I'm not a career politician and I don't plan to serve like one," Brist said. "I want to build a state government that makes it easier for people to live, work, raise a family, and retire in dignity here in Wisconsin."

Brist's campaign will focus on reducing the cost of childcare and housing, changing state laws that have led to rising property taxes, supporting workers' rights and small businesses, and investing in Wisconsin's world-class university system to attract jobs.

"Southeast Wisconsin should be a nexus of opportunity, with good transit, infrastructure, jobs, housing, and vibrant communities from here to the Illinois border," Brist said.

Brist's Army background and upbringing in a union household shapes his approach to leadership. "My parents taught me the dignity of work and the importance of serving your community. In the Army, I learned what it means to solve tough problems and be accountable. The 61st deserves a representative who listens first, leads with integrity, and puts our state's future above partisan politics."

The 61st Assembly District includes the villages of Greendale and Hales Corners, most of the city of Greenfield, and parts of Milwaukee and Franklin. The seat is currently held by Republican Bob Donovan. The Democratic primary will be held August 11, 2026, with the general election on November 3, 2026. For more information, visit bristforassembly.com