

Rep. Jacobson: Wisconsin Assembly votes to rein in out-of-control state agencies

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MADISON, WI – Yesterday the Wisconsin State Assembly voted for a package of bills to restore legislative oversight to the rulemaking process. This package was developed based on the findings of the Speaker's Task Force on Rulemaking. As the chair of that task force, and the author of two of the bills in this package, Representative Brent Jacobson (R – Mosinee) released the following statement:

“No body of our state government is more accountable to the people of our state than the Legislature,” said Rep. Jacobson. “In contrast, the bureaucrats who write administrative rules are unelected, and unaccountable to the people whose lives are affected by these regulations. The legislation which passed in the Assembly yesterday will restore oversight and transparency to our out-of-control state agencies, and ensure that bureaucratic functionaries do not get to ignore checks and balances.”

AJR 133 is the first consideration of an amendment to the Wisconsin Constitution. If passed in two consecutive sessions and approved by the voters, AJR 133 would allow the Assembly and the Senate to either temporarily or permanently suspend administrative rules by passing a joint resolution. This would give the Legislature the ability to undo regulations which impose heavy costs or compliance burdens on Wisconsinites.

AB 955 repeals a broad grant of authority to state agencies to create rules or regulations interpreting statutes, even if the statute does not grant rulemaking authority. It replaces this with a requirement that state agencies have specific and explicit statutory authority to promulgate rules. This will ensure agency regulations

do not exceed what was intended by state law.

“Keeping unelected bureaucrats in check should not be a partisan issue,” said Rep. Jacobson. “Rogue bureaucrats forcing regulations onto small businesses and taxpayers over the voters and their elected representatives is un-American, and I am disappointed by the absence of support these bills received from my Democrat colleagues.”