

GARD SAYS FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY KEY TO BALANCING BUDGET

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MADISON...Saying that the key to fixing the budget mess in Madison is making state government live within its means, Representative John Gard (R-Peshtigo) today unveiled a series of reform measures aimed at restoring fiscal responsibility in Madison.

“We do not have state budget problems because we tax our families too little, we face tough budgets because government spends too much,” said Gard. “It’s time to make government live within its means for a change instead of avoiding tough decisions and forcing families to pick up the tab for their spending spree.”

Gard said the long term goal of his reform agenda was to get Wisconsin out of the top ten highest taxed states in the nation.

“In Wisconsin, our income tax burden ranks 6th highest in the nation, our corporate tax burden ranks 14th, our state sales tax burden ranks 29th our overall tax burden ranks 3rd but our income only ranks 22nd.in the nation,” said Gard. “It’s easy to do the math on numbers like that. Our number one priority must be controlling costs and cutting taxes.”

The Fiscal Responsibility Agenda announced by Gard includes:

End Credit Card Spending by Government – Eliminating “structural deficits” by prohibiting the state from making future spending commitments without identifying specific funding for those commitments.

Cap Government Spending – Limiting state government spending to 1% less than the growth in personal income to ensure that government’s authority to spend may not grow more rapidly than out families’ ability to pay.

Taxpayer Protection Referendum Requirement – Requiring voter approval by statewide referendum for any general tax rate hikes.

State Employment Cap – Reducing the size of the bureaucracy by allowing state agencies to fill only 80% of their vacant positions.

Saving for Rainy Day – Restoring the integrity of the state’s Rainy Day Fund.

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“Cutting spending is tough. But when we duck making the tough decisions in the state budget we merely force those tough choices on to family budgets. That is wrong and must change,” said Gard. “These reforms put the needs of the taxpayer ahead of the wants of government.”

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