

# Advocacy Days 2023

**Denise Jess, Executive Director - WCBVI**  
**Erin Fabrizius, Blumenfeld & Associates**



**Wisconsin Council of the  
Blind & Visually Impaired**

# Mission & Values

---

The Council promotes the **dignity and empowerment** of the people of Wisconsin who are blind or visually impaired through legislative advocacy, vision services and education.

Values are inclusivity, integrity & uncompromising respect.

# Advocacy Priorities

---

- Accessibility & Civil Rights
- Education
- Employment
- Health Care & Long-Term Care
- Transportation

# Learn More

---

Find our advocacy priority documents at:

<https://WCBlind.org/Advocacy/>

# Legislative Lay of the Land

---

Governor Tony Evers (D)

State Assembly – 64-35  
Republican Majority

State Senate – 22-11  
Republican Majority

# The State Budget

---

The biggest piece of legislation to pass every session!

Governor Evers Introduced his 2023-25 Budget Feb.  
15

# The State Budget Impacts Everyone

---

It is a \$103.8 billion two-year plan that funds:

- Mass transit
- DVR Services
- OBVI Services
- Education and Special Education
- Health Care Services
- Election Administration
- And much more!

# Budget Highlights on Interest to WCBVI

---

The budget introduced by the Governor includes:

## **Transportation:**

1. Creation of RTAs
2. 4% per year increase to mass transit
3. \$10 million per year for transit capital grants
4. 15% per year increase to Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Specialized Assistance
5. Funding for Nondriver Advisory Committee ideas
6. Reinstates Complete Streets



# Budget Highlights on Interest to WCBVI

---

## **Health Care:**

1. \$135,600 for 1 new rehabilitation specialist position within OBVI
2. Expands BadgerCare eligibility to 138% of the FPL to save \$1.6 billion and cover an additional 89,600 people

## **Steve's Law:**

1. Allows a Wisconsin ID card to be used for proof of residency on the DNR GoWild site.

# Budget Highlights on Interest to WCBVI

---

## **Voting:**

1. Creates an Office of Transparency and Compliance attached to the Elections Commission. One of the duties would be research and assistance related to accessibility audits.
2. Creates automatic voter registration.
3. Eliminates restrictions on how soon a person may vote in-person absentee

# The State Budget Timeline

---

- Agencies and Governor Work on Budget Ideas April - August 2022
- State Agencies Send Budget Requests to Governor September 2022
- Governor Works on Budget Bill October 2022 - January 2023
- Budget Bill Introduced and referred to Joint Finance February 2023

# The State Budget Timeline (continued)

---

- Public Hearings on Budget Bill April 2023
- Joint Finance Committee Votes on Budget May – June 2023
- Full Legislature Vote on Budget June – July 2023
- Governor Signs, Partially Vetoes or Fully Vetoes Budget Bill June – July 2023

# Joint Finance Committee

---

**"Budget Writing" Committee: 16 members**

**Can add, remove or modify any budget item**



Co-Chair  
Sen. Howard Marklein



Co-Chair  
Rep. Mark Born

# JFC Members

*If your lawmaker is on this Committee, it is critical that you build a relationship with them*



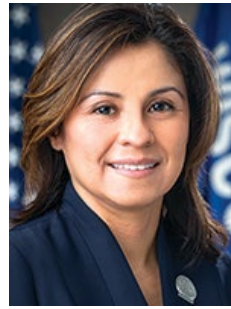
**Rep. Mark Born**  
R-Beaver Dam



**Rep. Terry Katsma**  
R-Oostburg



**Rep. Shannon Zimmerman**  
R-River Falls



**Rep. Jessie Rodriguez**  
R-Oak Creek



**Rep. Tony Kurtz**  
R-Wonewoc



**Rep. Alex Dallman**  
R-Green Lake



**Rep. Evan Goyke**  
D-Milwaukee



**Rep. Tip McGuire**  
D-Kenosha



**Sen. Howard Marklein**  
R-Spring Green



**Sen. Duey Stroebel**  
R-Saukville



**Sen. Mary Felzkowski**  
R-Irma



**Sen. Joan Ballweg**  
R-Markesan



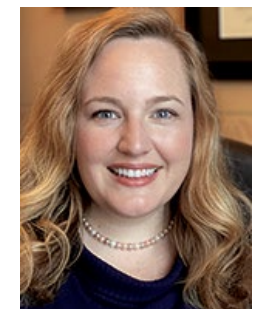
**Sen. Patrick Testin**  
R-Stevens Point



**Sen. Eric Wimberger**  
R-Green Bay



**Sen. LaTonya Johnson**  
D-Milwaukee



**Sen. Kelda Roys**  
D-Madison

# WCBVI's Budget Asks

- 1. Transportation:** Increases beyond inflationary costs
- 2. OBVI:** Support \$135,600 for an additional vision rehabilitation specialist position
- 3. Steve's Law:** Support the enactment of Steve's Law to allow ID cards to be used to access DNR passes and permits.

# WCBVI's Budget Asks (continued)

**4. Medicaid Expansion:** Accept federal funding to expand BadgerCare eligibility to 138% of the Federal Poverty Level

**5. Voting:** Polling place review program, polling place supply program



# How You Can Impact the State Budget

---

1. Submit written comments to the Joint Finance Committee at:

<https://Legis.Wisconsin.Gov/Topics/Budget/comments/Submit-Comment/>

2. Contact Your State Senator and State Representative

# Be an Advocate

---

**Educate:** Help policymakers learn.

**Advocate:** Express what you need.

Consider the policymaker as a **partner** in achieving your goals.

# **Join Us on May 3 in the Capitol!**

---

Everyone who attends this training is eligible to have an in-person visit with their lawmaker set-up in Madison!

We will advocate on WCBVI state budget priorities!

# Make the Most of Your Meeting

---

- Know your subject & audience.
- Figure out your outcome.
- Tell your story grounded in factual information.
- Listen, learn & respond.

# The Advocacy Message “Sandwich”

---

1. Greeting and introduction (the bread).
2. Why you are there and top concern (the condiments).
3. Why this issue matters to you (the protein).
4. Ask for what you need to happen (more condiments).
5. Thank you and closing (the other slice of bread).

# Research Your Legislators in Advance: Legis.Wisconsin.Gov



Senator Melissa  
Agard

Minority Leader

Senate District 16

(D - Madison)

[Home Page](#)

[District map based on 2022 Johnson v. WEC \(4/15/22\)](#)

[Subscribe to updates via Notify](#)

[2023 authored proposals feed](#)

[2023 all related items feed](#)

[2023 author index](#)

[Historical information](#)

**Madison Office:**

Room 206 South

State Capitol

PO Box 7882

Madison, WI 53707

**Telephone:**

(608) 266-9170

**Email:**

[Sen.Agard@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Sen.Agard@legis.wisconsin.gov)

**Staff:**

Aaron Collins

[Aaron.Collins@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Aaron.Collins@legis.wisconsin.gov)

Robert Abrahamian

[Robert.Abrahamian@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Robert.Abrahamian@legis.wisconsin.gov)

Authored

Co-authored

Cosponsored

Amendments

Votes

## 2023 Authored Proposals

(first or second author, first sponsor)

4/13/2023: **2023 Assembly Joint Resolution 28**

Relating to: honoring the life and public service of Governor Anthony S. Earl.

4/3/2023: **2023 Senate Joint Resolution 25**

Relating to: honoring the life and public service of Governor Anthony S. Earl.

3/24/2023: **2023 Assembly Joint Resolution 21**

Relating to: proclaiming March 31, 2023, as Cesar Chavez Day in the state of Wisconsin.

3/23/2023: **2023 Senate Bill 133**

Relating to: sexual assault by a health care provider and providing a penalty.

3/14/2023: **2023 Senate Joint Resolution 18**

Relating to: honoring the life and public service of Dr. Rebecca M. Blank.

3/8/2023: **2023 Senate Bill 113**

Relating to: changing the conditions of liability for worker's compensation benefits for emergency medical responders, emergency medical services practitioners, volunteer fire fighters, correctional officers, emergency dispatchers, coroners and coroner staff, and medical examiners and medical examiner staff.

# Find Out Who Represents You

---

- Legislative Hotline: 800-362-9472
- Website:  
<https://Maps.Legis.Wisconsin.Gov/Results.aspx>

# “On the Ground” Ideas

---

- In-office meetings
- “Neutral ground” meetings
- Forums & townhalls
- Extend an invitation (Lions Club, low vision support group, senior center lunch, etc.)
- Do something together (ride the bus, walk audits, etc.)



# Comments? Questions?

Contact us at:

(800) 783-5213

(608) 255-1166

[Info@WCBlind.org](mailto:Info@WCBlind.org)



# Follow the Council

---

Website: [WCBlind.org](http://WCBlind.org)

 @WCBlind

 @WCBlind

 @TheCouncilWI

 Wisconsin Council of the Blind & Visually Impaired