

<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/wi-senate-swearing-in-s448.jpg>



***Senator Smith lets readers know about the services available through his legislative office and encourages folks to call with any concerns or issues they may be having with any state agency.***

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MADISON - It may not come as much of a surprise to anyone who knows how much I enjoy talking with folks, but I especially enjoy the conversations I have during my roadside Stop & Talk events. People from every walk of life will stop by to say, "Hi." Some are happy to see me, while others have very specific ideas or complaints about our state government, or are just stuck trying to find help.

There are common themes that emerge through the conversations, like an overall lack of confidence in our government, or a feeling that our state just doesn't get how to help everyday people in meaningful ways. People often ask, "So, what can we get done?" So what is it that I (and my staff) can do for you?

A lot of times the answer varies, especially if it has to do with new legislation being proposed. Other times, I or someone on my staff, can work directly with a state agency to find a solution. A legislator, and his or her office, is meant to serve the constituents of the entire district they're elected to represent. From listening to your ideas and answering your questions to navigating state agencies or understanding who to get in touch with in the local or federal government to help.

## Here to Serve You

Written by Jeff Smith, State Senator District 31  
Wednesday, 01 May 2024 07:04

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Whenever I'm at the Capitol, the 31<sup>st</sup> Senate District office is a busy place serving the needs of nearly 180,000 people. We operate as a team. My name may be on the door of the office, but we work together to come up with solutions for those needing help. We respond to your phone calls and emails to share helpful resources. Team Smith also researches policy issues or potential legislation. Bill ideas often come from constituents who are facing difficult situations that need law changes to fix their problems.

As an example, earlier this year, we got a call from someone who was having trouble getting a realtor license finalized to start his business selling homes. Immediately, one of my staff called the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS). Within a few hours, the issue was resolved and a business license was issued the next day. It's not always that easy or swift, but in most cases, there's someone we can call at any department to get to the bottom of an issue.

This story highlights just one aspect of our service. This is the type of work we do that doesn't make the headlines the same way that political disagreements and new bills do.

We have contacts in every department and if we don't know the answer to your question off the top of our heads, we can find someone who does. We also connect with community organizations and nonprofits serving western Wisconsin and we can usually enlist them to help with taking care of a loved one or helping to find affordable housing. If my office can't help directly, we'll know someone who may be able to.



As a legislator, I can't step in to help with a constituent's court case or legal proceeding. And realistically, a bill I introduce can't become law at the snap of my fingers (no matter how hard I may try). It takes time for an idea to work its way through the legislative process, but it's my job

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to work with my colleagues – on both sides of the aisle – to have your ideas heard in the Capitol.

Many times, it's simply connecting with constituents at the farmer's market or at one of my Stop & Talks that will lead me to an issue I had no knowledge of before. Whether you see me at a Stop & Talk, have a contact card on your doorstep, or prefer to give my office a call, we are here to help.

How about you? Do you have an issue we might be able to resolve? Just send us an email at [Sen.Smith@legis.wi.gov](mailto:Sen.Smith@legis.wi.gov) or call us at (608) 266-8546. Certainly, don't shy away from approaching me in person when you see me around. I'm here to serve whenever you see me, no matter where it might be.

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*Senator Smith represents District 31 in the Wisconsin State Senate. The 31st Senate District includes all of Buffalo, Pepin and Trempealeau counties and portions of Pierce, Dunn, Eau Claire, Jackson and St. Croix counties.*