



WISCONSIN FAMILY ACTION
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Wisconsin Family Action Commends Legislators for Reining in Lottery “Advertising” Budget

MADISON, WI – “Finally, a bill that addresses the unconstitutional advertising of the state lottery and saves taxpayers money,” says Julaine Appling, president of Wisconsin Family Action.

Earlier this week State Senator Fred Risser (D-Madison) and Assembly Representative Rob Hutton (R-Brookfield) announced they have authored a bill that will cap the amount of spending for “informational advertising” for the Wisconsin lottery at \$5 million annually. Currently, the cap is \$7.5 million. Governor Walker has proposed an additional \$6 million be added to the lottery’s “informational advertising” budget in an effort to increase lottery ticket sales. Research shows that more advertising does not directly increase ticket sales.

In 1986, Wisconsin voters approved the lottery in a statewide referendum which included the provision that no “promotional” advertising of the lottery could be done using public funds or monies created through the lottery operation. The lottery commission has deemed their advertising as “product information.” They believe as long as the odds are given in an advertisement, then it isn’t advertising but rather “product information.”

The bill also requires that the information regarding odds be readily decipherable by the average viewer or listener by requiring that a human voice speak the information at a normal rate of speed.

Appling commented, “Thanks to Senator Risser and Representative Hutton at least with this bill the so-called ‘product information’ will be more than a blur on a tv or a voice speaking four times faster than normal. It’s time we stop being disingenuous on this ‘product information’ for the lottery. Let the good citizens of this state know that their odds of winning are ridiculously low.”

The lottery was originally approved with the idea of giving property owners a property tax credit. Over the last 10 years, the average lottery-generated property tax credit has been \$93.¹

“Capping the questionable advertising expenditures will make more funds available to property tax owners rather than hope that additional ‘product information’ results in additional ticket sales,” said Appling. “That’s a responsible position for the government.”

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Wisconsin Family Action is a statewide organization engaged in strengthening, preserving and promoting marriage, family, life and religious liberty in Wisconsin.

¹https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/misc/lfb/informational_papers/january_2017/0021_state_property_tax_credits_informational_paper_21.pdf Accessed 6/29/17