

***Press Release**
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Rep. Garthwaite Urges State Agencies and Private Media Sources to Cease Referring to the Seasonal H1N1 Influenza Virus as “Swine Flu”

*Introduces Resolution Calling For Change Citing Concerns About
Economic and Health Impacts of the Misleading Label*

State Representative Phil Garthwaite (D-Dickeyville) is calling on Wisconsinites to stop referring to the seasonal H1N1 Virus as the “Swine Flu”. Rep. Garthwaite is seeking cosponsors for an Assembly Joint Resolution that would ask state agencies, their representatives, and private media sources to be more careful about how they refer to this year’s novel flu strain.

“This resolution is about the health of our population and our economy. How we talk about this flu can make people afraid of things that are harmless and complacent about the real ways that this dangerous virus actually spreads,” said Rep. Garthwaite.

Many individuals and media outlets continue to refer to the H1N1 seasonal influenza virus as “Swine Flu” despite calls from many governmental and non-governmental agencies calling for an end to its use. The list of organizations who have issued public statements about mislabeling the flu include the US Center for Disease Control, the World Health Organization, and the Wisconsin Pork Producers Association.

“Wisconsinites need to know it’s perfectly safe to eat pork, it won’t make them sick with this flu,” said Rep. Garthwaite. “When people hear about the flu, they think that by eating pork products they are placing themselves at risk of getting sick. Nothing could be further from the truth. Wisconsin’s pork industry is already under strain from rising input costs, and the current economic downturn. The industry can ill afford a fall in consumer demand for pork based upon a misleading label. To be perfectly clear transmission of the current H1N1 virus is unrelated to American pork production, the preparation of pork products, or consumption of pork. The continued use of this misleading term represents a danger to an important component of Wisconsin’s agricultural base, and we need to change the way we are referring to this flu.”

Rep. Garthwaite encourages Wisconsinites to learn more about the seasonal H1N1 virus and how they can protect themselves and their loved ones. More information can be found on the Wisconsin’s Pandemic Flu Resource Web Site at <http://pandemic.wisconsin.gov/>, or on the Centers for Disease Control web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>. Anyone with additional questions or concerns is encouraged to contact Phil Garthwaite by calling his office at 888-872-0049 or 608-266-1170.

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