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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**February 12, 2020**

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## **Better Options**

**Madison** – Last night, the Wisconsin State Assembly voted on many bills including legislation on free speech on campus, sexual assault, and increasing criminal punishments. Representative Considine (D-Baraboo) was disappointed to see these partisan bills passed. After adjourning, Rep. Considine released the following statement:

“The Assembly voted on many bills today. The takeaway is that we can do better.

“We have better options to protect everyone’s rights to speak freely, be protected against sexual assault or make a mistake and have a chance to redeem oneself. We have bipartisan proposals on these issues in the Assembly. Unfortunately, last night Assembly leadership ignored stakeholders, constituents, and colleagues as they brought partisan versions of these bills to the floor for a vote.

“Yesterday the Assembly passed a bill that would establish prohibitions related to freedom of speech on college campuses. Our better option would have been to leave this issue to the experts at UW System who are better equipped to deal with campus issues. Additionally, we passed a package of bills that will incarcerate children and adults more often and for longer. Our better option would be to recognize that punitive measures do not correct behavior and mental health programs and community-based programming does. The Assembly also passed a partisan bill on sexual assault kits which has no stakeholders registered in favor, but many registered as opposed. Our better option would be to hear and pass the bipartisan legislation that is backed by stakeholder groups and 72 senators and representatives.

“The legislature has immense power to better protect the lives and rights of all citizens in Wisconsin. We need to listen to our constituents, stakeholders, and each other. Last night, the Assembly passed up better bi-partisan options.

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