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May 29, 2018
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Column: Ballweg Honored for Work during 2017-18 Legislative Session

Over the 2017-18 legislative session, I was honored to work with various groups and associations on their legislative priorities for the year. I am a firm believer that the best and most valuable legislation comes from the constituency that it will directly affect, which is why I value these partnerships so much. This year, I was recognized by six of these organizations for my support and advocacy for our shared priorities.

I received the 2017 Public Service Award and the 2017 Legislator of the Year Award from the Wisconsin Housing Alliance. This group's mission is to advocate on behalf of the factory-built housing industry and those who live in manufactured home communities. I worked with them on 2017 Wisconsin Act 109 which will improve compliance to dwelling codes by sending code compliance notices directly to the owner of the manufactured home rather than the community operator. Homeowners are the ones who have the power to bring their homes up to compliance, and I hope that through this law less evictions will occur due to non-compliance.

From the National Association of Social Workers, I also received a 2017 Public Service Award. With their partnership, my office was able to pass two pieces of legislation that will advance their goal of producing high-quality, competent social workers in Wisconsin. I believe that high quality social workers can make a world of a difference in enhancing the life of our diverse populations.

Mental Health America recognized me as one of their 2017 Regional Policy Council Legislative Award recipients for my work relating to diversion and deflection for people with mental health issues out of the criminal justice system. Mental Health America is a nationwide non-profit dedicated to promoting the overall mental health of all Americans. In the past, I have participated in many task forces and study committees related to mental health, and I am honored to be recognized on the national level for my commitment to these issues.

I was recognized as the 2018 Legislator of the Year from the Wisconsin Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics because of our partnership to pass a bill that allows certified dietitians to prescribe therapeutic diets to nursing home residents. This bill helps align state and federal administrative code so that the medical community can comply with recent updates and continue to make dietitians an important part in patient health.

I received the 2018 Enlightened Legislator of the Year Award from the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association and the "Building Wisconsin" Award from the Associated Builders and Contractors-Wisconsin Chapter for my strong support of past legislation and my commitment to listening to members and helping them through the legislative process.

I am honored to be recognized on behalf of my partnerships with these organizations. Without their support on these important issues, I wouldn't have had such a successful legislative session. If you

have any ideas for future legislation please reach out to my office. In addition to my work with associations like these, I have had very effective bills be brought to my attention by constituents and welcome any input.

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