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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
June 28, 2017

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Novak Named to Assembly Foster Care Task Force

Madison – Rep. Todd Novak (Dodgeville) was named to the Assembly Foster Care Task Force today along with Co-Chairman Rep. Pat Snyder (Schofield), Rep. Jessie Rodriguez (Oak Creek), Rep. Terry Katsma (Oostburg), Rep. Joan Ballweg (Markesan), Rep. Treig Pronschinske (Mondovi), Rep. Joel Kitchens (Sturgeon Bay), and Rep. Adam Neylon (Pewaukee). There are still five democrats, including an additional co-chair, who will be named to the committee. This committee will be tasked with evaluating Wisconsin’s current foster care system and looking for ways the state can improve the lives of those involved.

“It is my hope that my experience as a court appointed guardian, licensed foster parent, and a father of two adopted sons will be of substantial benefit to this task force,” said Novak. “I’ve been a strong advocate for both foster parents and youth since becoming a legislator. I hope to continue this through my work on this task force.”

The task force will look at all aspects of the system including families who have not yet entered the child welfare system, are currently a part of the system, and youth who are exiting the system and looking to enter the workforce or receive an education.

“Providing support as these youth exit the system is key,” said Novak. “Whatever we can do to help these young adults pursue higher education or enter the workforce goes a long way towards preventing future generations from ending up back in the system.”

This session, Rep. Novak authored a bill that creates a tax credit for foster youth who have aged out of the system. He is currently working on an additional bill that would waive tuition at UW schools and Wisconsin Technical Colleges for high school graduates in foster care.

Over the coming months, Rep. Novak and others assigned to this task force will be traveling the state and holding public hearings where they will receive feedback from foster care children, parents, stakeholders, and experts. They will then present these findings along with legislative recommendations to be considered before the end of session.

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