Van H. Wanggaard
Wisconsin State Senator

EMBARGOED UNTIL 1PM
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WANGGAARD ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

Senator Van Wanggaard (R-Racine) is announcing that he will retire at the end of his term, and not seek reelection. Wanggaard is the longest serving Republican state senator and is the only Republican ever to be elected to four terms as senator in the 21st District.

Wanggaard is the author of three constitutional amendments, enshrining victim's rights, bail reform, and voter id into the Wisconsin constitution. He also authored hundreds of new laws, protecting the vulnerable among us, fighting for law enforcement, bringing school choice to Racine and making sure people – not government or special interests - benefited from tax dollars. Wanggaard released the following statement about his retirement:

"I would like to thank everybody for their patience while I made this decision. As I said at the end of the year, my heart was telling me one thing, my head the other, and I wasn't sure which was saying what.

"I have seen the extreme ideas Democrats have been trying to normalize the last few weeks locally and statewide throughout the session. Ideas that have been proven to be disasters elsewhere. More than $7 billion in new spending for special interests and government – not the people. Giving power to bureaucrats, forcing costly regulations which will drive up costs for families. Thinking the answer to making things more "affordable" for families is fixed by creating more "free" government programs all paid for by taxes on those same families and employers, driving costs up further. While he wasn't talking about affordability, President Reagan was right. "Government is not the solution to our problem. Government is the problem."

"In my heart, I desperately want to run again. I would love to continue to serve as a common-sense conservative voice in the Legislature. Public service is in my blood. Whether it was as a police officer, county board supervisor, Racine Zoo Board member and president, police and fire commissioner, or state senator, serving the community has been my life's work. I am confident I would win a tough re-election on my platform of protecting the vulnerable, making life affordable, and eliminating waste and fraud in government.

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"My head is telling me it's time to retire. I'll be 78 years old at the end of the next term. My staff and colleagues worked with me to try to make something workable for the campaign and the next four years. But my health, and the health of my family will not allow me to put my all into this campaign, or serving the 21st District. After running for election 4 years ago, I've lost 3 siblings, my daughter was diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer, and a brother had a heart attack and has dementia. That weighs on me more than you can know.

"When my law enforcement career was cut short by a federal fugitive fleeing custody, breaking my neck and flattening my spinal cord, I never could have imagined being, much less enjoying being, an elected official.

"To the people who helped make that happen, to my staff and all my colleagues who served with me, the voters of the Racine and Kenosha counties who elected me to four terms in the state senate and most importantly my family,

"Thank you."

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