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## Kiefer a strong voice for reform

A Wisconsin State Journal endorsement  
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Tim Kiefer stands out as a principled reformer with big ideas for change at the state Capitol.

Voters in north-central Dane County should support Kiefer's strong bid for the open 81st Assembly District seat in the Sept. 9 Democratic primary.

Kiefer, 36, of Madison, is the best choice among a crowded and talented field of challengers for the seat Rep. Dave Travis is leaving.

The winner of the Democratic primary will essentially win the general election because no Republicans are seeking the post and no write-in candidates have emerged.

The smart, no-nonsense Kiefer has a polite yet forceful style that will help him get things done in the Assembly.

Kiefer also has guts. Like a young Russ Feingold, he seems more than willing to stand by his convictions and lead through example.

Kiefer wants to replace the full-time, career politicians at the state Capitol with a part-time, citizen Legislature. Only 10 states pay their lawmakers full-time salaries, Kiefer notes, and Wisconsin is by far the smallest of those.

Kiefer understands it won't be easy to convince an entrenched Legislature to cut its pay in half for part-time work. Regardless, Kiefer is walking his talk by pledging to accept only half of his legislative salary if elected.

A part-time Legislature would have less time for partisan games and grandstanding, Kiefer convincingly argues. And limited sessions would encourage more focus on workable solutions.

Kiefer's experience as an assistant district attorney will help him press for needed reform of Wisconsin's prison and court systems.

As a prosecutor, Kiefer has put plenty of bad guys behind bars. Yet he supports expanded use of alcohol and drug treatment as well as education and work for inmates to better ensure they stay out of prison once released. Such reforms could save money *and* protect the public by reducing recidivism.

A Kenosha native, Kiefer's compelling life story helps explain his deep commitment to education.

The son of a telephone lineman and a school secretary, Kiefer was the first person from his family to go to college. He graduated from UW-Madison and earned a law degree at Harvard before returning to Dane County.

Kiefer isn't as concerned about controlling and scrutinizing spending as the State Journal editorial board would like.

But Kiefer shines on other important priorities. He'll fight for clean lakes, a high-tech economy, domestic partner benefits and merit selection reform to restore trust in the state Supreme Court.

Voters in Black Earth, Cross Plains, Madison, Mazomainie and Waunakee should elect the impressive Kiefer on Sept. 9.

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