October 28, 2011

My Fellow State Employees,

Today I am announcing state policy on the recently-enacted concealed carry legislation for the Capitol and other state buildings. In short, Act 35 allows responsible, law-abiding citizens who have completed the proper training, obtained a license and who follow the provisions of the law, to carry a concealed weapon for their own protection. As Secretary of the Department of Administration it is my duty to implement this law as it applies to state facilities. Having worked with those who passed the concealed carry legislation - and the Governor who signed it into law - I understand the legislative intent and the spirit of the law. Therefore, with limited exceptions, we will allow concealed carry in the Capitol and other state buildings.

There are three areas where concealed carry will be prohibited. First, where State and Federal statutes prohibit carrying concealed in certain types of facilities, such as police stations, courts, schools and other such areas. Second, where there is a significant risk that the general population within or served by a facility could overcome a person carrying concealed; such facilities will be prohibited from concealed carry. Probation and parole offices, mental health institutions and other similar facilities meet these criteria. Third, we will prohibit concealed carry in areas where the inadvertent discharge of a weapon could create an explosion or chemical reaction. To alert individuals as to where they may and may not carry concealed, I have directed state facilities to post signs designating areas where concealed carry is not allowed.

With limited exceptions due to the nature of the work, state employees, subject to the same license and training requirements, will also be allowed to carry concealed anywhere the public is allowed to carry concealed. If state employees choose to carry concealed, they are expected to follow all applicable laws, keep the weapon on their person at all times and exercise their constitutional rights in a responsible manner. Failure to do so will result in possible arrest for violation of any applicable laws, and/or discipline up to and including termination.

The adoption of concealed carry represents a change for Wisconsin - and with any change comes some measure of anxiety. However, I ask you to consider the following:

- While new to our state, Wisconsin is actually the forty-ninth state to adopt some form of concealed or open carry legislation. Chances are if you travel outside of Wisconsin you have visited states that have adopted concealed carry.

- In those forty-eight other states the incidents of crimes involving weapons being committed by those legally carrying concealed are extremely rare, or more often nonexistent. Sadly, crimes involving weapons are committed in those states and our own, but not by those who go through the process to secure a license to carry concealed.

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- Wisconsin has a strong hunting culture and sporting heritage. Respect for responsibly exercising our Second Amendment rights are engrained within that culture. We have no reason to believe law-abiding citizens who choose to carry concealed will abandon a tradition they have upheld themselves and instilled in their children.

As a state employee, should you chose to carry concealed you will be expected to be respectful of your fellow employees and provide the example of how this law works in practice with responsible citizens. You may have questions about specifics of exercising that responsibility at work. Please consult your supervisor before you decide to carry concealed at work so you fully understand the work rules and your obligations and responsibilities. To those state employees who chose not to carry concealed, I ask that you respect the legal rights of those who do in a lawful and responsible manner.

Thank you for your cooperation as we implement this new law.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Mike Huebsch
Secretary