

**Holperin**

**Senate**

*the Northern Advantage*

PO Box 1256 • Eagle River, WI 54521 • 715.891.1412 • holperin\_00@yahoo.com

Paid for by Holperin - Senate, Sandy Kinney, Treas.

## Northwoods Must Be Part Of State's Long Term Energy Policy

Monday, June 30, 2008  
(For more information: 715-891-1412)

12<sup>th</sup> District State Senate candidate Jim Holperin said today he is prepared to provide the aggressive advocacy that will be necessary to insure that the northwoods is a meaningful partner in the state's race for energy independence.

“Obviously, the Wisconsin legislature has limited influence over today's unacceptably high gas prices,” Holperin acknowledged. “No one can wave a magic wand and force oil producing nations to increase production, create stability in the middle east, completely halt speculation in oil or instantly compensate for lack of a federal energy policy.”

“However, Wisconsin can continue to be a leader in the alternative fuels industry by increasing research and development in cellulosic ethanol and pursuing other forms of alternative energy,” he said. Cellulosic ethanol, or fuel created from wood waste or other plant matter, has considerable potential to not only reduce prices at the pump, but to create new economic opportunities in northern Wisconsin where forestry is a key part of the local economy.

“You can't capitalize on federal grants and research opportunities, or respond to the needs of the scientific community on this topic if your top priority is simply to make government smaller,” he asserted. “Energy independence is one area where even state government needs to be active, involved and aggressive.”

Holperin pointed to the recent \$125 million Department of Energy grant awarded to the University of Wisconsin as one example of how Wisconsin can continue to lead the nation in alternative fuels. “The five-year grant will generate high-quality research and new product development in cellulosic ethanol that will create new companies and new jobs here in Wisconsin,” he said. “Northern Wisconsin needs to be connected to that initiative and to benefit from it.”

The Eagle River Democrat said additional research into alternative fuels should also be accompanied by support for alternate modes of rural transportation. “Historically, cheap gas has meant little or no demand for public or mass transit in rural areas, but that’s about to change,” he said. “State government needs to re-evaluate its transportation budget and earmark some support for rural bus initiatives and other transportation alternatives like park-and-ride or van pooling.”

Holperin said one of his top transportation priorities would be to assure that rural northern Wisconsin continues to receive regular adjustments in per mile road aids. “The lack of interstate highways, rail lines and public transportation means our rural roads are the lifeline to tourism, commerce, work and education,” he said. “The critical role good rural roads play must not be underestimated or ignored by the legislature.”

“Town road aids are a little over \$2,000 per mile this fiscal year,” he concluded. “I intend to make sure that regular annual increases are approved by the legislature in order to keep up with rising labor and materials costs.”