



STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**CORY MASON**

WISCONSIN STATE ASSEMBLY  
62ND ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

**For Immediate Release**  
May 17, 2007

**Contact:** Representative Cory Mason  
Cell: (262) 880-0388  
Office: (608) 266-0634

## **Mason/Lehman Budget Motion to Combat Infant Mortality in Racine Passes Unanimously**

*Proposal Will Help Create and Fund Local Plan to Save Infants*

MADISON— Representative Cory Mason (D-Racine) praised the Joint Finance Committee today for unanimously passing a motion to combat infant mortality in Racine. The motion will provide the City of Racine with \$250,000 annually to fund a plan to combat the high infant mortality rate in Racine. The funds will sunset after two years.

“I want to thank John Lehman for his leadership and willingness to advance this in the Joint Finance Committee. Racine has the highest infant mortality rate in Wisconsin. We have a responsibility to do something about this,” said Rep. Mason. “I am glad members from both parties came together in a bipartisan way to protect the state’s youngest and most vulnerable citizens. Implementing a plan that keeps high risk mothers and their babies healthy will save our community money in Medicaid costs. More importantly, it will save innocent lives.”

The Mason/ Lehman budget proposal will direct the state’s Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) to work with City of Racine public health officials, Wheaton Franciscan Hospital, and area universities to identify the best practices and services needed to address infant mortality in Racine.

The plan includes developing models of care for pregnant women who meet high risk criteria by providing prenatal and postnatal care, public education, and other actions proposed by the local coalition. Funding for the program would come from DHFS, and the City of Racine would be required to provide annual progress reports on this program to DHFS.

“Now that we can get mothers and their infants the quality of care they deserve, we know we can reduce infant mortality,” concluded Mason. The budget proposal still has to pass the Senate and the Assembly as part of the Biennial Budget. Governor Doyle has committed his support to the program when it reaches his desk.

###