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American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin Response to Governor Doyle's State of the State Address

Milwaukee – The ACLU of Wisconsin considers Governor Jim Doyle's State of the State Address a mixed bag in terms of civil liberties. While the Governor was correct to focus on the hard times all Wisconsin residents face, the ACLU of Wisconsin will await the Governor's budget with great anticipation. We await further details on education reform, Real ID, and health insurance coverage for the domestic partners of all state employees among many issues. In addition the possibility of sobriety checkpoints needs to be dropped, says the ACLU of Wisconsin.

Christopher Ahmuty, Executive Director of the ACLU of Wisconsin, made these specific remarks:

“The ACLU of Wisconsin applauds the Governor's commitment to public education and changing the way that schools are funded. We hope that the Governor establishes comprehensive school funding reform that provides an adequate education for all Wisconsin students. Reform must ensure that all children have an adequate education, whether they are in Superior, Crandon, or Milwaukee; whether they live in concentrated poverty, are English language learners, or have other obstacles in their paths.”

“While drunken driving is a serious issue, the ACLU of Wisconsin is disappointed that the Governor chose to stress sobriety checkpoints in his State of the State address. We believe that there are more cost effective ways to deter drunken drivers, ones that do not offend the civil liberties of innocent drivers. We urge the Legislature to concentrate on other measures.”

“The Governor can not include every issue in his State of the State Address. Therefore, the ACLU of Wisconsin is awaiting the budget in anticipation of word on issues, such as a reasonable state position on the now-discredited federal Real ID program, and a commitment to providing health insurance coverage to the same sex domestic partners of all state employees.”

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