Thank you for this opportunity to introduce myself and discuss a few of my legislative health priorities. My name is Donna Rozar, and I represent the 69th Assembly District in the Wisconsin Legislature. My district includes a portion of Wood and Marathon Counties and much of Clark County. I have lived in Marshfield since 1988, moving here from West Virginia when my husband, Ed, accepted a position at the Marshfield Clinic as a cardiothoracic surgeon. We have 5 children and 6 grandchildren. I am also a recently retired registered nurse and nursing school instructor.

Nursing was my calling and served me well for many years. What a privilege and honor to serve patients and their families, as well as student nurses over those years.

Part of my campaign platform when I decided to run for the state Assembly was support accessible, affordable rural health care. My husband and I made the decision to join the Marshfield Clinic in 1988 because of its history of providing quality health care services to rural Wisconsin. Having been a recipient of that quality care over the years, and as a nurse that served patients with that same quality care, I know how important it is to have access to competent health care providers who provide excellent care. I will support legislation that promotes the delivery quality care in the most efficient, cost-effective way.

Enhancing dental care in Wisconsin is also one of my legislative priorities. As a former cardiac nurse, I understand how oral health affects cardiovascular health as well as other systems of the body. I want to spearhead efforts to ensure basic dental coverage for Medicaid patients in Wisconsin. I realize this will take tremendous effort as well as a strong public/private partnership, but I also believe it is worth the effort. I have seen the health consequences related to and costs of poor oral hygiene. I think health outcomes can be improved and the state can save money long-term if dental coverage can be provided for those who do not have access to care.

I am also a strong advocate for public health and believe in being pro-active with education, preventative measures, and assistance that is evidence-based, cost-effective, and benefits the entire community. Without question, rural communities can benefit greatly from population-based services provided by local health departments and private public health organizations.

As a new legislator, I realize I still have much to learn in this position, but I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Legislature to advance polices that improve health outcomes for the people of Wisconsin.