MADISON, WI – Senator Mark Miller (D-Monona) offered the Democratic weekly radio address regarding the need to close the Dark Store loophole.

“Imagine the lost revenue to municipalities and school districts if every large chain stops paying their share of property taxes. Individual homeowners would then pay more. When their property taxes go down, these big box stores do not lower their prices, they just earn more profit.” – Senator Mark Miller

The audio file of this week’s address can be found here .

A written transcript of the address is below:

“Hello, this is Senator Mark Miller with the weekly Democratic Radio Address:

“Something is happening all across the state of Wisconsin that many people are still unaware of, but may dramatically raise your property taxes.

“I’m talking about the Dark Store Issue. A state Supreme Court decision in 2008 allowed large box stores and large chain stores, like Walgreens, to successfully challenge their property tax bills, by claiming that their stores should be assessed the same as similar, VACANT stores – or Dark Stores. Imagine the lost revenue to municipalities and school districts if every large chain stops paying their share of property taxes. Individual homeowners would then pay more. When their property taxes go down, these big box stores do not lower their prices, they just earn more profit.

“Fortunately, there is legislation to protect homeowners and small businesses from these huge property tax increases. Big Box stores should pay their property taxes, just like other property owners.

“Unfortunately, the powerful special interest lobbying group, the Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce (WMC) opposes protecting homeowners. The Senate Republican Leadership is cow-towing to WMC and is blocking this bipartisan legislation that would protect property taxpayers. Unfortunately Republicans in the legislature repeatedly block every attempt to bring this important bill before the body.

“Tell your senator the Dark Store bills to protect homeowners must be scheduled for a vote

now!”