

Shilling Will Not Seek Re-election

Written by Wisconsin Senate, Kate Constalie
Friday, 03 April 2020 08:39



After 20 years of service, Democratic Leader looks to chart a new course.

MADISON, WI – In announcing her decision to not seek re-election to the State Senate this fall, Senate Democratic Leader Jennifer Shilling (D-La Crosse) released the following statement:

“Today I announce I will not seek re-election to the State Senate. It was not an easy decision, but I know it is time to put my family first and look to a future where I can put away my little red suitcase that has accompanied me on my weekly travels to Madison for the past 20 years.



“It has been a tremendous honor to represent western Wisconsin in the Legislature, and I cherish the many friendships that I have made along the way. It is honestly something I never imagined for myself as a young girl growing up in Wisconsin. I have always said that running for office was a family decision, and it really is the only lifestyle my family knows. However, with Nate in high school and Zach entering middle school, I know the time with our boys at home is fading. Chris has been a tremendous support from both near and far, and he has managed the schedule, activities, and life’s happenings with love and patience. I could not have spent the past 20 years in the Legislature without his love, support, and understanding of the job. However, it is time that I explore new opportunities and challenges in this season of waning family time.

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“Thank you to the voters of the 32nd Senate District for placing your trust in me to be your voice in Madison. It is an honor, and I am grateful for the opportunity to have served you in the Legislature. A broad smile, firm handshake, and kind words throughout the district brightened my day, as I listened to, learned from, and laughed with the hardworking people of western Wisconsin. From dairy breakfasts, community events, and business tours to parades, school visits, and disaster recovery efforts, you showed me what perseverance, ingenuity, and strength looks like across the Driftless Region.

“I also want to thank my Democratic colleagues for the opportunity to serve as the Senate Democratic Leader. It is a responsibility that is challenging and I hope I met your expectations. I have the utmost respect for this institution and aspired to bring civility and common sense to the Senate, as we are all serving a small role in our state’s history.

“I do not leave with regrets, I leave with wonder – wonder about the future, about what will be. Wonder about what lies ahead, and a wonder of new ways that I will continue to be able to serve my community, and others.

“Thank you from a very full and grateful heart. Onward, Upward, Forward!”

Jennifer Shilling is finishing her third term in the State Senate after being elected in a 2011 special election. She previously served as the State Representative for the 95th Assembly District. She was elected to serve as the Senate Minority Leader in 2014 and is the longest serving female leader in Wisconsin legislative history. As a legislator, Shilling has had many bills signed into law including legislation ranging from health care modernization and infrastructure upgrades to criminal justice reforms and workforce development assistance.