

# W I S C O N S I N

## Civic Participation Lecture Series



Congressman Tom Petri (Ret.)  
and Congressman Dave Obey (Ret.)

The Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service and the David R. Obey Civic Resource Center present an opportunity for university students and the general public to hear directly from former elected officials about how politics work at the state and national levels, and the importance of civic participation in bipartisan discussions on key policy issues.

Former Congressmen Tom Petri from Wisconsin's 6th Congressional District and Dave Obey from Wisconsin's 7th Congressional District are committed to sharing their knowledge and experience via speaking engagements throughout the state.

### Potential topics Include (but are not limited to):

- An insider perspective on how Congress works
- The role of committees in Congress, and its effectiveness
- How Congress creates and passes budgets
- How a representative balances national issues with district responsibilities
- The critical role public service plays today – more than ever
- Forging one's way into politics at the state or national level
- Opportunities and challenges of a career in public service
- Is our political system broken? If so, how do we fix it?
- Advocating for strongly held policy positions without excessive partisanship
- A wide range of domestic and international policy topics including:
  - ▶ Overview of U.S. economic health
  - ▶ The future of health care
  - ▶ The state of higher education and student aid
  - ▶ Meeting America's future transportation and infrastructure needs
  - ▶ National and homeland security
  - ▶ U.S. foreign policy

### Objectives

The objectives of these lectures and policy discussions are to:

1. Encourage citizens, especially young people, to gain greater insights into how participatory democracy works;
2. Provide information to the public on laws and legislative processes at the state and national levels;
3. Help students of all ages understand the value of active involvement in public work; and,
4. Create opportunities for young people to research and discuss public policy issues in a civil manner.

### Costs and Funding

The speakers and convening organizations desire to offer this opportunity to students, classrooms and community groups at minimal cost and will work with any interested group, particularly where students are the primary audience. However, we must cover our costs, so cost-sharing is necessary.

### More Information

To reserve a date or for more information, please contact: Connie Nikolai at [connie.nikolai@uwc.edu](mailto:connie.nikolai@uwc.edu) or 715-261-6368.

## Congressman Tom Petri

### B I O G R A P H Y

Tom Petri represented Wisconsin's 6th Congressional District from 1979-2015 and before that was a Wisconsin State Senator from 1973-1979. After earning degrees from Harvard College and Harvard Law School, Petri was clerk to a federal judge, served as a Peace Corps volunteer and worked for the U.S. Agency for International Development before taking up a law practice in Fond du Lac. In the Congress, Petri served on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (and chaired the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit of the Transportation), the Committee on Education and the Workforce (formerly Education and Labor) and the House Ethics Committee, among many other assignments. A persistent foe of government waste, Petri earned high marks from fiscal watchdog organizations, and was named a "Guardian of Small Business" by the National Federation of Independent Business. Important Petri legislative initiatives have included student loan reform, the federal highway program, cost-sharing for federal water projects, tax and welfare reform, banking reform, campaign finance reform and health care reform.



## Congressman David Obey

### B I O G R A P H Y

Congressman Dave Obey is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin with an undergraduate and Master of Arts degrees in political science with a focus on Russian area studies. He represented Wisconsin's 7th Congressional District in the House of Representatives for 42 years. The longest serving member of Congress in Wisconsin history, Obey was a key leader in Congressional reform efforts and chaired the committee that wrote a new code of ethics for the House. Throughout his career, he has been a leader of progressive forces on issues including worker rights, education, health care, medical research, environmental protection and international relations. Congressman Obey currently serves as a Senior Fellow at the Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service and on the Board of the National Alliance for Behavioral Health.

