



GARY ALAN HEBL

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
June 27, 2019

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Rep. Gary Hebl, (608) 266-7678

Republicans Pass Stripped Down Budget Despite Bipartisan Opposition

After travelling the state to listen to the needs of everyday citizens, Governor Evers presented a budget that reflected the will of the people of Wisconsin. After eight long years of budgets that included carve outs for special interests, Governor Evers once again prioritized the people instead of the powerful. Unfortunately, Republicans removed or gutted many of these popular issues in passing their budget. They couldn't even pass their budget without facing opposition from their own party.

By far the worst outcome of the budget was the removal of Medicaid expansion. Expanding Medicaid is perhaps the biggest slam dunk I have seen in my time in the legislature. The benefits are incredible:

- An additional 82,000 Wisconsinites would be eligible to receive Badgercare
- It would save health care providers in Wisconsin \$100 million per year
- It would lower premiums on *private* insurance by 7-11%
- Refusing to expand Medicaid in Wisconsin results in more than \$1 billion in federal tax money being redistributed to other states that have expanded Medicaid *every year*. This means Wisconsinites are subsidizing other states health insurance without even benefitting our own residents!

The majority party has made a huge mistake in removing the Medicaid expansion. 70% of Wisconsinites are in favor of it, yet still it was removed.

The final budget that passed the Assembly and the Senate also had steep cuts to Governor Evers' education proposals. His original investment in special education was cut from \$606 million to \$97 million, an 84% decrease. His general school aid proposal saw a 46% cut (from \$611 million over the biennium to \$330 million). Overall, Governor Evers proposed spending \$1.4 billion on Wisconsin school children and educators. The majority party cut nearly a billion dollars off of that, settling at around \$500 million.

It seems clear that the majority party does not have the interests of the majority of Wisconsinites in mind. I had hoped that with divided government we might get a budget that I could vote for. However, it seems the majority party is intent on ignoring what the people want, focusing instead on what they themselves want at the expense of public education and affordable health care. Unfortunately, it seems that what they wanted most was to hijack Governor Evers proposal and remove the most popular provisions in an effort to deny him any signature achievements. Once again, their main priority is to look to the next election instead of helping their constituents. This is not the way a government of the people, by the people, for the people should work.

-END-