

Romaine Quinn

State Representative • Serving the 75th Assembly District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rep. Quinn: Bringing the Budget Home

Madison – Representative Romaine Quinn (R-Rice Lake) said that his vote to pass the budget was informed by meetings with community members. “Sitting down with my constituents and hearing from many perspectives, I was able to make sure the budget focuses on our priorities,” he said.

“The budget that I voted for sends millions of new dollars into our local schools, increases funding for local road aids, protects our most vulnerable, and holds the line on property taxes,” said Rep. Quinn. “This is a good budget, and I’m proud to have made it better.”

The budget contains several provisions championed by Rep. Quinn and that will directly impact the 75th District. One of these is the Dementia Care Specialist positions, which was not funded under the Governor’s proposal. “Dementia Care Specialists play a huge role in communities across the state, including our district. I urged the Joint Committee on Finance (JFC) to preserve the positions. In fact, JFC expanded the program to cover more counties.”

The Rural Wisconsin Initiative, championed by Rep. Quinn, added two other health-focused provisions to the budget. RWI proposals increased funding for Advanced Practice Clinicians and Allied Health Professionals, two areas that are experiencing shortages. In rural areas, vacancies for Advanced Practice Clinicians can run up to 14%, creating burdens on available staff and decreasing hospital efficiency. However, when Wisconsin students go through their training in-state, 86% stay in Wisconsin to work. The RWI proposals create important grant programs to train these support staff and fill vacancies in rural hospitals.

The RWI also added a provision to expand funding for the state’s Broadband Expansion Grant initiative, which provides matching grants to communities to install high-speed internet. The budget increases funding for this program by \$11 million in this fiscal year alone, and a mechanism to continue funding without specific budget provisions in the future. The provision also expands TEACH grant eligibility to 19 new schools, ensuring that more rural students are able to effectively use the technology they have.

Other pieces of the budget impact the 75th District’s environment. Rep. Quinn supported a motion to preserve funding for county conservation officers – the positions had been slated for a budget reduction, but Assembly efforts fully restored funding. A second provision gives more funding to Wisconsin’s Aquatic Invasive Species Education and Control Grants. “I recently sat down with a group of Barron and Washburn County residents who are working on protecting our lakes. The expanded funding for these grants gives them an important tool to take advantage of,” said Rep. Quinn.

“No budget is perfect – I’ll continue to fight for lower transportation bonding and more money for local roads, for example,” said Rep. Quinn. “But this budget is a huge step in the right direction, and does great things for our district.”

Rep. Quinn added, “There’s a lot more in the budget that I’d be happy to talk about. If you have any questions, please call my office at (888) 534-0075 or email Rep.Quinn@legis.wisconsin.gov.”

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