



## Wisconsin State Legislature

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
CONTACT: LUTHER OLSEN (800) 991-5541

April 4, 2019

### **State Budget Process – How can I get involved?**

The Legislature's Joint Finance Committee is holding a series of public hearings on the 2019-21 Biennial State Budget to hear from residents around the state about the issues matter to them. These public hearings are a fantastic opportunity for citizens to have their voice heard before the Joint Finance Committee begins their work. No pre-registration is required, just come to locations listed below and fill out a hearing slip. All of the hearings will begin at 10 a.m. and conclude at 5 p.m.

Friday, April 5  
Pontiac Convention Center  
2809 North Pontiac Drive  
Janesville

Wednesday, April 10  
Oak Creek Community Center  
8580 South Howell Avenue  
Oak Creek

Monday, April 15  
University of Wisconsin-River Falls  
University Center  
Riverview Ballroom #260  
500 Wild Rose Avenue  
River Falls

Wednesday, April 24  
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay  
University Union - Phoenix Room  
2430 Campus Court  
Green Bay

While many professional organizations and interest groups have been to Madison to speak with legislators about their budget priorities, I often hear from regular people that they are not sure how to best let legislators know which parts of the state budget are the most important to them. If you cannot attend one of these hearings, please consider submitting written comments to the committee. E-mail your comments to [BudgetComments@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:BudgetComments@legis.wisconsin.gov). These e-mails will be shared with all of the members of the Joint Finance Committee.

The statutory language of the biennial budget is hundreds of pages long and difficult to understand unless you are accustomed to reading the state statutes. If you are interested in learning more about what is contained in the state budget, I would suggest you read the summary documents on the Legislative Fiscal Bureau's website at:  
[http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/misc/lfb/budget/2019\\_21\\_biennial\\_budget](http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/misc/lfb/budget/2019_21_biennial_budget).

Before the committee travels around the state for the public hearings, we are holding a series of agency briefings. This is an opportunity for state agency leaders to tell the committee about their budget requests and for committee members to ask questions. In my past experience on the Joint Finance Committee, and this year as well, I have asked for clarification regarding some of the agency spending requests to understand why they are requesting funding. When it comes time to make the tough decisions, we need to know what the agencies' real priorities are.

Following the public hearings, the Joint Finance Committee will begin considering the 2019-21 State Budget, looking at the overall tax and spending levels, bonding, as well as how much to allocate to specific agencies and programs. I am confident that the Joint Finance Committee will craft a reasonable and responsible state budget that reflects the values of our state.

*If you have any questions about any of the information I have included or if you have suggestions on other topics or issues you would like learn more about, you may call my office toll-free at (800) 991-5541; write me at P.O. Box 7882, Madison, WI 53707; or e-mail me at: [Sen.Olsen@legis.state.wi.us](mailto:Sen.Olsen@legis.state.wi.us). You can also sign up for our newsletter at our website: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/senate/sen14/news/index.htm>.*