



HOWARD MARKLEIN

STATE SENATOR • 17TH SENATE DISTRICT

State Budget Update

May 21, 2015

As a member of the legislature's Joint Finance Committee (JFC), I am working with my colleagues revise Governor Scott Walker's budget proposal to meet the needs of our state. A final budget is expected to be approved by the legislature and signed by the Governor by the end of June. To date, the JFC has made the following adjustments to the budget:

Education

Education Funding - added \$200 million to K-12 education funding. Restored the \$150 per pupil aid and added \$100 more per pupil in the second year. More than \$10.6 billion is invested into public education over the next biennium. (5/19)

Educational Communications Board/WPR/WPTV – restored \$1.6 million in funding and 8.6 positions. (5/15)

Statewide School Choice - expanded the program statewide to provide parents with choices and create a program in which funding follows the child. (5/19)

Economic Development

Prosperity Southwest WI Revolving Loans - reinvested \$250,000 into a revolving loan program for Grant, Lafayette, Green, Richland and Crawford counties. Funds redirected from WEDC to a successful local economic development consortium. (5/21)

Transportation

Vintage & Antique Tractors –changed the vehicle registration requirement to allow vintage and antique tractors to travel on highways to participate in parades and tractor club events. (4/22)

Car-Deer Kills – funding was maintained for the program to remove deer roadkill from Wisconsin roadways. However, the source of the funding was changed and the DNR is now required to report on the program's effectiveness and offer recommendations. (4/22)

Natural Resources & Agriculture

DNR Board & DATCP Board –provisions to make the Natural Resources Board and the Board of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection into advisory committees removed. (4/15)

State Park Solvency – I authored a motion for the state parks account that would improve the financial condition of the state park system. We also required the DNR to study ways for the state parks to increase revenue and manage resources for continued sustainability. (5/7)

Fish & Wildlife Account - require the DNR to study and address the imbalances in the Fish & Wildlife account. This account, which is funded by fees attached to hunting and fishing licenses, is operating at a \$3.5 million deficit due to a declining number of hunters. (4/22)

Public Safety

Lafayette County Sheriff's Department – added a grant for \$50,000/year for the Lafayette County Sheriff's Dept. to hire an officer dedicated to drug law enforcement. (5/7)

Law Enforcement Officer-Involved Death

Investigations – added \$630,000 for four positions over the biennium to conduct officer involved incident investigations. (5/7)

Health & Human Services

Aging & Disability Resource Centers – maintained ADRCs as they currently operate, serving each community directly. (5/12)

SeniorCare – restored the SeniorCare program. (5/21)

Drug Testing and Treatment for Public Benefit

Recipients – created a program to identify and help citizens overcome addiction and destructive behaviors to support and encourage them to get back to work. (5/19)

Anti-Fraud Support for Entitlement Programs – added \$250,000 for county governments to implement anti-fraud measures for entitlement programs such as FoodShare. These funds have a federal match. (4/17)

Mental Health Crisis Service Grants - increased funding to counties by \$1.5 million for mental health support services. (5/12)

Domestic Abuse Grants – increased funding by \$5 million in the second year (2016-17). (5/12)

Human Trafficking Victim Services – increased funding by \$2 million in the second year (2016-17). (5/12)

Sexual Assault Victims Servicing Funding (SAVS) – added \$100,000 GPR to the Department of Justice in 2016-17 for grants under the sexual assault victims servicing grant program. (5/7)

Wisconsin Well Woman program - added \$100,000 to the Wisconsin Well Woman Program for breast and cervical cancer screenings and diagnostic. (5/5)

Rural Emergency Medical Education – provide a \$40,000 grant for advanced life support training to doctors, physician’s assistants, nurse practitioners, registered nurses and paramedics who work in rural hospitals and clinics. (5/5)

Municipal / Local / Rural Issues

Local Property Insurance Fund – delayed the elimination of this fund by 2 years so that local units of government will have time to figure out new plans. (4/17)

Property Assessment Policy – removed proposed changes for municipalities and counties. (4/15)

Broadband Expansion – tripled funding for Broadband Expansion Grants from the proposed \$500,000 per year to \$1.5 million annually over the next four years. These grants provide reimbursement for equipment and construction expenses incurred to extend or improve broadband telecommunications service in underserved areas of the state. (4/15)

Wisconsin Fund for Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (POWTS) Grants – restored the Wisconsin Fund which provides grants to low-income residents for part of the costs of repairing and replacing failing septic systems. (5/5)

Collaborative Municipalities – created a levy limit exemption for municipalities who collaborate with other municipalities for various services and projects. We want to encourage policies that promote efficiency and collaboration to minimize duplication of services in our communities. For example – shared ambulance and EMS services. (5/14)

Carryforward – addressed the “tax to the max” policy. Our current tax limits inadvertently encourage communities to levy taxes to the limit because if they don’t use them they aren’t able to recover these dollars in the subsequent year. This new policy will encourage communities to tax for their needs, but preserve upward mobility in the future. To achieve this, we created a levy limit adjustment allowing a political subdivision to increase its allowable levy by the amount of unused levy authority from prior years and set the maximum carryforward factor to 5%. (5/14)

I look forward to seeking common-sense budget ideas that will ensure quality government programs and services for all of our residents and taxpayers. As I continue to review the budget bill, I appreciate your input. For an Executive Summary of the budget, please visit: <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/lfb/publications/budget/2015-17%20Budget/Pages/publications.aspx>

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