



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
ROBYN VINING

13TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: July 3, 2025

Contact: Representative Robyn Vining
608-237-9113

State Budget Is A Broken Promise to Wisconsin Families -Rep. Robyn Vining's Statement on the 2025-2027 Budget

MADISON—The Wisconsin State Assembly voted on the 2025-2027 biennial state budget today, which was approved by the Republican-controlled Joint Committee on Finance. Representative Robyn Vining (D-Wauwatosa) released the following statement:

“A budget is a moral document—it reflects our values. And this budget, from my perspective, is a broken promise to Wisconsin families, an insult to educators, and an attack on public education. Public schools are at the heart of our communities, and they should be at the heart of our state budget. Childcare is early childhood education, and our University of Wisconsin System is a crown jewel.

“Every child in Wisconsin has a constitutional right to an adequately funded education, and this budget misses the mark. We've heard this over and over again, from people across the state of Wisconsin—fund our public schools. We are hearing this loudly because 96 out of 99 state representatives have had referendums in their districts in 2024 and 2025. This funding's not enough. **No general aid? What are we doing?** And why? This is shocking, and it's not normal. **Special education reimbursement increases—**sure—but **well below what is desperately needed for our public schools.** This budget increased voucher funding significantly, but left public schools to what—go to referendum to stay open, meet the needs of their students, pay teachers?

“This cycle of referendums is creating toxicity in communities, pitting neighbor against neighbor, forcing superintendents into political roles, driving up housing costs beyond affordability, and pushing people—including seniors—out of their homes. This cycle of referendums is unacceptable, and it is a direct result of this legislature failing to do our job and adequately fund public education.

“This budget should better value public education and its role in shaping both our children and Wisconsin's future.

“When Republican lawmakers look at what they are doing with the UW System, I'm so glad that we've got the capital funding, but worker requirements for teachers? That's insulting. I understand that Republican lawmakers think that there are some points to be made here about what professors do and don't do, but they clearly don't understand the work of a professor—they've made that very clear through this budget process. Republican lawmakers don't understand the job—or what it takes to attract world-class faculty. Professors deserve to be treated with dignity, honor, and respect—the way that Wisconsin should treat all of our educators.



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“There is a lot of good stuff in this budget today. I am committed to being a legislator who gives credit where credit is due, and credit is due today. On UW System mental health, the \$7M for the mental health program—that's what we wanted. That is going to change the trajectory of students' lives. It's important. It's good. 988 funding is good, so are minors' safety plans. I am glad to see Democrats move Republicans to do more about mental health.

“On mental health in K-12 schools, there is some funding. The governor negotiated it and deserves credit for this. Republicans had cut mental health funding, and this is less of a cut. It was \$30M in the last budget, and \$30M in this budget. It's an inflationary cut—which is a cut. But thank heavens Governor Evers and Democrats moved Republicans to do a better job of funding mental health in K-12 schools. It's good—I think we need more—but this is good. I'm really appreciative of Leader Hesselbein in the Senate and her hard work negotiating to make this budget better—whether it's the UW buildings or shifting special education reimbursement numbers higher, or local municipalities seeing increases, or childcare—she moved the needle. On childcare, there's some movement. There's *some movement*.

“We got Republican lawmakers to move on childcare, and that's good. But this is where we shift into things that really, quite frankly, are not good enough. This budget extends what is similar to Child Care Counts for a year—in the first year. But in the second year? *Nope*. In the second year, we implement policies that I'm concerned about, like changing the ratios and solving childcare shortages with child labor. Not an apprenticeship program—which I think is worth looking into—but a plan to hire kids to take care of kids, *even with known concerns about this*, because it costs less. I don't think that's the answer. In year one, we are on target. In year two, we are missing the mark. It's not good enough.

“A budget is a moral document—it reflects our values. And this budget is a broken promise to Wisconsin families, an insult to educators, and an attack on public education. Public schools are at the hearts of our communities, and they should be at the heart of our state budget. The University of Wisconsin System is a crown jewel, childcare is early childhood education, and educators should be honored for the valuable role they play in the shaping of Wisconsin kids, and Wisconsin's future. I know my district. I know what people have trusted me to come here and do. This budget does not reflect our values. The legislature has not done its job. The vote is no.”

Rep. Vining represents the 13th Assembly District, which includes Elm Grove, and parts of Wauwatosa and Brookfield. For more information visit Rep. Vining's website [here](#).

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