



DEMOCRATIC MEMBERS
JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 11, 2021

Contact: Sen. Jon Erpenbach (608) 266-6670
Sen. LaTonya Johnson (608) 266-2500
Rep. Evan Goyke (608) 266-0645
Rep. Greta Neubauer (608) 266-0634

Budget Bulletin: GOP Pays More for Less on Corrections and Environment

A Recap of Joint Finance Committee Action on the 2021-23 State Budget

MADISON – The Joint Finance Committee (JFC) continued to work through the budget process in an executive session on Thursday, June 10, 2021. JFC took action on budget items for the Departments of Corrections, Circuit Courts, Supreme Court, Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection, and Natural Resources. In an effort to help keep Wisconsin citizens more informed, Democratic members on the committee provided the following recap of what happened in the budget hearing and how that impacts Wisconsin communities:

Corrections and Juvenile Justice

Democrats on the committee offered omnibus [Motion #92](#) that included policies to reform the criminal justice system, including earned release and revocation alternatives, but was quickly rejected. Democrats then introduced [Motion #93](#), encompassing the Governor’s budget request for DOC and DCF-Juvenile Justice. The motion included over \$26 million in annual funding for correctional officer overtime pay and additional funding for the Opening Avenues to Reentry (OAR) program. Motion failed 4-11.

The Republicans on the committee moved [Motion #96](#). The motion contained none of the criminal justice reforms that have been shown to work at reducing prison populations across the country, \$10 million less GPR funding for overtime pay and no additional spending for OAR programs. The motion passed 11-4.

Courts

Republicans offered [Motion #94](#), funding the additional circuit court branches mandated by 2019 Act 184 and additional funding for CCAP. The motion passed unanimously 15-0.

Justice, Public Defenders and District Attorneys

Democrats on the committee offered omnibus [Motion #95](#), encompassing the Governor’s budget request for DOJ, Public Defenders and District Attorneys. The motion included one-time pay progression funding totaling over \$10 million for district attorneys over the biennium, and expansion of the Treatment Alternatives and Diversion (TAD) program in DOJ totaling over \$19 million in GPR funding. The motion failed 4-11.

Republicans offered [Motion #98](#). It included less than half of the pay progression increase for DA’s, and over \$12 million less additional GPR funding for the TAD program. The motion passed 12-3.

-OVER-

Legislature

Democrats on the committee offered [Motion #97](#). The motion funded several minor items and required the full legislature to approve any hiring of outside counsel associated with redistricting or the hiring of investigators for any purpose. The motion failed 4-11.

Republicans offered [Motion #78](#). The motion funded all items in the Democratic motion at the same level, and created a biennial appropriation to fund the Legislative Human Resources Office, but did not include the Democratic item relating to hiring of outside counsel or investigators. The motion passed unanimously.

DNR and DATCP-Environment

Democrats on the committee offered [Motion #100](#). The motion was ruled out of order for containing policy items removed in Motion 19, including non-fiscal items from the [Clear Act](#) related to PFAS contamination and remediation. Democrats then offered [Motion #99](#), containing all non-policy items from the Governor's DNR and DATCP-Environment budget requests. Notably, the motion contained a 10-year reauthorization of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, with annual bonding of \$70 million. It also contained several fiscal items related to PFAS remediation. The motion failed 4-11.

Republicans offered [Motion #102](#). It contained a four-year reauthorization of the Stewardship Program, with annual bonding of just \$21.25 million, fewer programs and dollars to address PFAS contamination across the state, and \$34 million less overall additional funding for conservation of Wisconsin's lands and environment. The motion passed 10-4.

###