



# CALVIN CALLAHAN

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 35

(608) 266-7694

Toll-Free (888) 534-0035

Rep.Callahan@legis.wi.gov

P.O. Box 8952

Madison, WI 53708-8952

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## **Act 58: One Year Later - Column by Rep. Calvin Callahan (R – Tomahawk)**

Friday, July 15<sup>th</sup> marked one year since Governor Evers took his veto pen to the budget presented to him by legislative Republicans and I'd like to take a moment with you to reflect on this. When I came into the State Assembly, one of my priorities was to ensure hardworking folks like those in the 35<sup>th</sup> Assembly District benefited from the provisions included in Wisconsin's biennial state budget. I needed to make sure no one up North was forgotten about by those down in Madison. This is something that will always be an ongoing priority of mine during my time in the Legislature.

In Governor Evers' 2021-'23 budget proposal, he included more than \$1 billion in tax increases on Wisconsinites, funding welfare expansion, growing the size of state government by more than 300 employees, and providing government benefits to illegal immigrants. During a time of high inflation and gas prices, along with recovering from a pandemic, this is not what Wisconsinites were asking for. Not to mention, the governor also proposed in his budget raising the gas tax and indexing it to inflation, amounting to an increase of more than 30%.

Republicans, on the other hand, listened to our constituents. Myself, along with Sen. Mary Felzkowski, held multiple budget listening sessions across the district to hear from folks about what they'd like to see in the state budget. Returning to Madison, we shared what we heard with our colleagues and worked to craft a budget that worked for you and the rest of the state. Instead of raising taxes, we not only returned those tax dollars to you, but also made major investments in roads, broadband expansion, and healthcare.

In a rural area, like we have here in the 35<sup>th</sup>, I'm proud to have supported a budget that provided \$125 million in broadband expansion. Without strong internet connections in today's society, folks are unable to compete in business, study for school, or utilize telehealth. Additionally, we invested \$85 million more into state and local highways than the governor proposed, and even bonded less to prevent passing the bill onto future generations.

You may see or hear Governor Evers try to take credit for Republican tax cuts and more than a decade of responsible budgeting. However, one year ago, he used his veto pen to slash a \$3.4 billion tax cut for Wisconsinites by over \$1 billion. With today's economy feeling the pressure from Washington's liberal tax-and-spend policies, that extra cash would be extremely helpful for a lot of families. Always remember that Republicans here in Wisconsin are committed to fighting the governor's short-sighted tax increases, so you can keep more of your hard-earned money.