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## *Act 19: One Year Later – Column by Rep. Callahan (R-Tomahawk)*

As we gear up for the next state budgeting session in six months, I would like to take a moment to reflect with you on what our most recent budget prioritized and what we have accomplished. This past session, I supported a budget, enacted on July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, crafted by legislative Republicans to support ALL Wisconsinites, including the Northwoods.

I am proud to have supported the changes included in the budget to shared revenue funding. Rural communities have been hurting for our fair share from the state for a long time, and this budget provided a boost for rural municipalities. Every community across the state received at least a 20% increase, with many in the 35<sup>th</sup> Assembly District receiving much more. The formula is now tied to the state sales tax, so as the state succeeds, so will our smaller communities.

Additionally, more than \$1 billion of new money was allocated to K-12 education through general aid and categorical aid. Mental health, literacy, and special education continue to be priorities throughout the state, which are reflected in our budget. Rural school districts received additional funding in categorical aid funding through items like sparsity aid and high-cost transportation aid.

Throughout the 35<sup>th</sup>, you know our roads could use some maintenance. I supported a budget that put \$130 million more into local road aids than what the governor had proposed. I also helped with the creation of the new Agricultural Road Improvement Program (ARIP), which will function similarly to the popular Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP). In total, we invested \$1.5 billion into transportation projects in Wisconsin.

Finally, due to high inflation, it is understandable why many folks are hurting to put food on the table. The Republican budget included an average income tax cut of \$573 per filer. Unfortunately, the governor took his veto pen and slashed this cut by 95%, bringing it to only \$36 per filer. Luckily, the budget included other tax relief, including over \$600 million in property tax relief and a full repeal of the personal property tax.

I was proud to support the budget that was passed by legislative Republicans. I look forward to this next budget and hearing from you about your priorities, so we can keep moving Wisconsin forward.