



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Budget Prioritizes Politics Over Policy

MADISON - Today, the state Assembly took up and voted on the budget. In response, Rep. Conley (D-Janesville) issued the following statement:

“Budgets are about priorities. The budget as presented prioritizes politics over people, and therefore is not one I could support with my vote. It certainly doesn’t create a state that attracts new businesses nor does it bring back our youth when they are ready to start a family.

“Everyone deserves the right to a high-quality education. Thanks to President Biden and Governor Evers, we have almost \$5.7 billion in new revenue. Despite this, Republicans effectively put almost zero new dollars into classrooms. In fact, almost all of the funding Republicans put towards schools will go to towards property tax relief, not our children’s classrooms. Governor Evers created a plan to use our resources to put more money into classrooms *and* cut property taxes across Wisconsin, and that’s what Democrats’ amendment would have done. Instead, Republicans are funding a regressive tax cut at the expense of our schools, the UW System, and local government.

“Republicans are continuing to ignore special education, which has long been underfunded. We could have funded school district special education costs at **50%** by the end of the biennium, but Republicans are increasing funding by **a mere 2%**-from the current 28% to 30%.

“Also long-underfunded are shared revenue payments to local governments for communities like the City of Janesville, which have not seen an increase in over a dozen years. Governor Evers provided an increase to ensure local governments can provide economic opportunity and vital services to Wisconsinites. Democrats also proposed an amendment to provide state funding directly to local governments to offset the repeal of the personal property tax, preventing increased taxes on residential homeowners.

“To attract workers and support a strong economy, it is critical that parents have access to high-quality childcare so they can return to work with confidence that their children are safe and engaged throughout the day. The Child Care Strong initiative included in Governor Evers’ budget prioritized addressing childcare deserts through a \$106 million investment over the biennium targeting the high cost of early childcare. However, the budget presented before us on the floor today did not prioritize childcare or support working parents.

“We have also missed a significant opportunity to accept the Medicaid expansion which would have provided healthcare to an additional 90,000 Wisconsinites. Governor Evers’ budget included other investments in healthcare that Republicans eliminated in the final budget.

“Finally, instead of partisan gerrymandering, Wisconsin needs and deserves a non-partisan solution that takes the power of map drawing out of the hands of politicians. Voters from all across our state have made it very clear that they support a non-partisan approach to drawing the district maps. Their voices should matter more than current politicians’ desire to retain their seats in this building. Governor Evers’ budget set up a non-partisan redistricting system to ensure Wisconsin voters have a say – a priority - in the electoral map creation.

“I thank Gov. Evers for offering a budget that prioritized the people of Wisconsin first. I am disappointed that we were not able to vote for a budget that does so today.”

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