



POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

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WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE Session Overview

Budget

\$76.5 BILLION Total 2017-19 budget.

432 State government positions
Assembly Republicans removed
from the proposed state budget.

\$495 MILLION Cut from the proposed budget.

\$62 MILLION Decrease of the structural deficit.

\$579 MILLION Surplus at end of the
2015 - 2017 budget.

\$385.2 MILLION Projected surplus for the
2017 - 2019 budget.

\$285 MILLION Record high rainy day fund. LFB
anticipates another deposit in fall
to raise it to \$310 million.

Legislation

91% Acts based on a bipartisan basis.
334 acts approved with bipartisan
votes. 33 on a partisan basis.

1950 Bills introduced in legislature.
367 enacted into law.

1068 Assembly bills introduced
(regular session).
214 enacted into law.

882 Senate bills introduced
(regular session).
132 enacted into law.



Taxes

Since Republicans regained the majority in 2011, we have cut taxes in Wisconsin by more than \$8 billion. Our efforts to reduce the tax burden has pulled our state out of the top 10 taxed states in the U.S. The Tax Foundation now ranks Wisconsin at #38 and the tax burden is at its lowest level in more than 50 years according to the U.S. Census Bureau. In addition, property taxes will be lower in 2018 than they were in 2010 on the average Wisconsin home. We have eliminated several taxes including the state property tax, alternative minimum tax and the soda water tax. Assembly Republicans have also been leaders in reforming and simplifying the tax code, an effort that will continue into the next session and beyond.

By the numbers

\$8.4 billion. Amount that Republicans have cut taxes since 2011.

100%. How much the GOP repealed of the state property tax.

50 years. The last time the tax burden was this low.

\$3,000. The money property taxpayers would have had to pay on the average Wisconsin home if we hadn't held the line on property taxes. Property taxes are lower today than in 2010.

\$100. The per-child tax credit that nearly 700,000 households received.

\$14.8 million. The amount in tax relief that was projected to be returned to taxpayers during the August sales tax holiday.

Budget

Lessening the Tax Burden and Simplifying our Tax Code

- Keeps property taxes lower than they were in 2010 and 2014.
 - Provides \$48M over the biennium to keep property taxes below 2014 levels.
- **Keeps sales and income taxes flat.**
- **\$75M Personal Property Tax Cut:** Repeals a portion of the onerous personal property tax so that small businesses can spend more time growing their business than paying taxes and filing reports with the government.
 - Provides \$75M to ensure local municipalities see no reduction in tax revenues.
- **Repeals 4 different taxes:**
 - The forestry mill tax (i.e. state property tax) (over \$180M in savings to taxpayers.)
 - The alternative minimum tax (\$7M in savings to taxpayers.)
 - The soda water beverages tax.
 - The sales tax on internet access charges.
- **Rainy Day Fund:** continue to put money into what already was our largest rainy day fund in state history.



- **IRA Charitable Rollover:** allowed for tax-free distribution from an IRA to a qualified charitable organization. This will help foster generosity and could simplify tax filing, as this is already currently permitted for federal income tax purposes. This measure was similar to a bill introduced prior to being taken up in the budget. (AB 176)
- **Eliminates the Victory Tax:** exempts from taxation the value of an Olympic medal and associated prize money from the U.S. Olympic Committee.

Managing Referendums

- Reforms municipal levy limit referenda to make them more transparent and accountable to taxpayers.
- Limits the scheduling of school referenda to regularly scheduled elections to hold school districts accountable to taxpayers.

Legislation

Taxpayer Fairness Act (Act 231)

- Helps level the playing field between government and taxpayer in audit situations by reducing the legal threshold for certain taxpayers to establish economic substance behind business transactions.
- Creates greater certainty for taxpayers after disputes are settled by clarifying the taxpayers' ability to rely upon the results of past audits.

Taxpayer Efficiency and Protection Act (Act 324)

- Allows taxpayers to choose to receive notification from DOR electronically, instead of in the mail.
- Stops the over-collection of sales tax by businesses who receive two or more written notices from DOR by imposing a sales tax penalty of 25%.
- Allows truncated social security numbers on information returns to safeguard against identity theft.

Creation of a \$100 per child tax rebate and sales tax holiday (Act 367)

- Due to our responsible fiscal decisions and strong economy, we have a budget surplus that we gave back to Wisconsinites in the form of a child tax rebate and sales tax holiday.



Jobs and the Economy

Wisconsin ends this session with an economy that is the strongest it has been in decades. The strength of Wisconsin's economy is due, in part, to many of the bold economic reforms made over the last few legislative sessions. This session saw many new reforms that will help grow the local economy for all people for generations to come. The Assembly led the way on passing these reforms that ranged from grants for internships to the largest direct foreign investment in United States history with the Foxconn project.

Budget

\$75 Million Personal Property Tax Cut

- Repeals a portion of the onerous personal property tax so that small businesses can spend more time growing their business than paying taxes and filing reports with the government. Funding is provided to local municipalities to ensure they did not have a hole in their budget.

DOR Requirement to Use Statistical Sampling

- We required DOR to use statistical sampling when auditing businesses to ensure a more accurate auditing process and protecting small businesses from time consuming and costly audits.

Provides More Funding to WEDC to Help Attract and Retain Businesses

- Approved a \$75M+ budget and allowed WEDC the flexibility to use those funds to attract new businesses to Wisconsin and retain existing talent and businesses already here.

Legislation

Rural Economic Development Funding (AB 912*)

- Provides \$1 billion over the next 20 years to rural communities to encourage business start-ups, relocation, development, and growth.

Grants for Paid Internships (AB 40*)

- Requires WEDC to allocate \$125,000 to a grant program that would dispense grants of up to \$3,000 per recipient for internships for students in this state that go to internships that focus on the creation of new business.

Grants to WEDC for Attracting New Talent to Wisconsin (Act 318)

- Legislation provides \$6.8 million to WEDC so they can partner with the Dept. of Workforce Development and Tourism to implement a campaign aimed at attracting and retaining a talented \ workforce in Wisconsin.

Expansion of Wisconsin's Start-up Tax Credit Program (Act 234)

- Wisconsin has a tax credit program aimed at start-up businesses covering both "angel stage" investments and "early stage seed" investments. This legislation allows the tax credits to apply to new businesses that have received up to \$12 million dollars in investment (opposed to just \$8 million under previous law).

Asterisk () indicates legislation passed by the Assembly but not the Senate*



Grants for Increasing Robotics Participation in Middle Schools (Act 315)

- Recognizing technology's increasing role in the economy and Wisconsin's strong manufacturing base, this bill will help train future workers for such fields. Under prior law, DPI awarded grants of up to \$5,000 to robotics competition teams just in high school. This legislation expands the types of teams eligible to receive a robotics league participation grant to include high school teams with sixth, seventh, and eighth grade members.

Expansion of New Wireless Technology (AB 348*)

- This bill would help implement the rollout of new "5G" wireless technology. In business and technological world that is increasing going wireless and online, this legislation would provide municipalities and wireless providers with the framework each could rely on to build the new wireless infrastructure of tomorrow.

Employment Standardization Act (Act 327)

- Provides statewide standards regarding business regulations so that employers and employees can expect the same treatment and operation regardless of location. Additionally, this prevents patchwork laws that employers must sift through costing time and additional resources that could be invested in the business and its employees.

Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit (Act 280)

- Raises the amount of credits that can be claimed per project under the Historic Tax Credit (HTC) program from \$500,000 to \$3.5 million, starting July 1, 2018. Raising the limit will increase the feasibility of more projects across the state while still ensuring cost controls on the program. This program also helps to increase property values while reducing blight through the revitalization of often vacant buildings.

Town of Cable TID for Development (Act 292)

- Allows for redevelopment of an historic Wisconsin Landmark, the Telemark Lodge, which will create 150-200 construction jobs and keep 150 people employed year-round once completed.

Creation of Oostburg TID and New Jobs (Act 1)

- This economic development means a company can build a 150,000 square foot facility in Wisconsin and bring 120 new jobs to the area. Without the expansion of the cap the facility would most likely be built out of state.

Industrial Hemp Program (Act 100)

- Creates a state "industrial hemp" program to be administered by DATCP with input and oversight by DOJ. This program will allow and aid Wisconsin farmers in the production of industrial hemp—a non-psycho-active product—by helping them with federal guidelines and developing a registration and seed certification program. Wisconsin was once one of the leading producers of industrial hemp in the United States and this legislation could help add a significant economic driver back to Wisconsin's agricultural economy.

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2017 August Special Session on Economic Development Foxconn (Act 58)

- Creates an Information Technology and Manufacturing Zone for WEDC tax credits that resulted in the largest direct foreign investment in a state in United States history. This legislation has the potential to create over 10,000 jobs and induce up to \$40 Billion dollars in economic activity, all while protecting Wisconsin taxpayers by ensuring that no tax credits are issued until jobs are created and outside investment is made.

THE FOXCONN[®] EFFECT

APRIL
28

Initial work commences on project site in Mount Pleasant

Foxconn hires 28 state-wide contractors

Foxconn awards contracts to 37 Wisconsin companies



WISCONSIN ASSEMBLY
GOP



Mount Pleasant



Appleton



Kenosha



Franksville



Brookfield



Madison



Menomonie



Burlington



Franklin



Waterford



Nekoosa



Marathon



Disability Workforce

With record low unemployment and a growing economy, Wisconsin needs an all-hands-on-deck approach to our workforce. Under Republican leadership, we've continued our focus of getting people back to work, and this includes those with disabilities. Wisconsin was recently ranked in the top 10 states in the percentage of people with disabilities who are employed. Wisconsin outperformed the national rate of 34.9 percent by having 41 percent of people with disabilities employed in our state. The work we've done is clearly shown through those numbers but we continue to do more.

Budget

MAPP Fiscal Cliff Mitigation

- Eliminates a barrier to work for those enrolled in the Medicaid Purchase Plan (MAPP) by removing the premium cliff as individuals transition into earning more income.

Better Bottom Line Transition Incentive Grants

- This fund rewards schools that prove they have moved more students into community employment at a competitive wage and into postsecondary training. Previously underfunded, the 2017-19 state budget fully funds the program.

Eliminates Children's Long-Term Support Services Program Waiting List

- Eliminates the waiting list for Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) services program, which helps those with developmental disabilities, severe emotional disturbances, and physical disabilities. This will provide approximately 2,200 children with the care and services they need.

Legislation

Employment First (Act 178)

- Seeks to promote competitive integrated employment (CIE) of people with disabilities. Requires state agencies with responsibilities in the area of disability employment to collaborate and develop a joint plan to assist people with disabilities in finding employment in the community. The collaboration required under this bill will help agencies work better together, braid funding, and align policies so it is easier for people to get the support they need to find and keep a job.

Partners with Business (Act 323)

- Requires the Board for People with Developmental Disabilities to develop a coaching program for the hiring of individuals with disabilities that directly engages private and nonprofit businesses. This will better the system used to support disabled individuals in the workplace by allowing for integrated, co-worker support.



Collin’s Law—Notification for Invisible Disabilities (Act 244)

- Creates a voluntary registration for those with invisible disabilities (such as autism, etc.), with the aim of easing interactions with law enforcement. Creates a voluntary flag in the DOT system that will alert officers to an invisible disability status and provide notes on how to approach a person with an invisible disability. This will give law enforcement better tools to interact with these individuals more effectively which can help prevent misunderstanding.

Supported Decision Making (Act 345)

- Allows for supported decision-making agreements in which the adult would choose a “supporter” to help them gather information that is relevant to a medical, financial or educational decision, but the final decision making authority would remain with the individual. This offers another option for people who need assistance but will not strip people of their right to make their own decisions.



Rural Wins and the Rural Wisconsin Initiative

(Accomplishments that came out of the RWI will be in italics)

Our state's rural areas are facing complex challenges, which include broadband expansion and access to health care. Rural schools educate 44 percent of the state's public school students but many districts struggle with declining enrollment due to aging populations and lack of young families. There is also a need to address the skills gap in order to sustain local businesses. Assembly Republicans have led the way on rural issues. Twenty-five members of the Wisconsin State Assembly formed a Rural Wisconsin Initiative dedicated to addressing the needs of the many small communities in our state.



Budget

Investing in Rural Healthcare

- *Wisconsin Rural Physician Residency Assistance Program (WRPRAP), increased by \$200k over the biennium.*
- *Creates a \$1 million matching grant program for training of Advance Practice Clinicians.*
- *Creates a \$1 million matching grant program for training of Allied Health Professionals.*
- A large portion of the DSH and critical care payment increases approved by JFC will assist rural hospitals.
- Fully funds 19 Dementia Care Specialist positions through county Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs). These positions are especially critical for northern counties which have rapidly aging populations.

Quality Education for All

- Provides \$1 million to connect future teachers with rural school districts facing teacher shortages.

Legislation:

Language Interpretation Grants (AB 305*)

- Requires DHS to provide \$100,000 in grants to rural and underserved hospitals for language interpretation services.

Broadband Expansion (AB 123—ultimately taken up in the state budget)

- Makes \$11 million available for broadband expansion.

Library Grant Eligibility (Act 142)

- Makes librarians in rural areas eligible to receive TEACH grants, to improve information technology infrastructure in rural libraries and also allows public libraries to use DPI's data gathering and data use programs.

Asterisk () indicates legislation passed by the Assembly but not the Senate*



TID in Bayfield County (Act 292)

- Will be used to renovate the Telemark Ski Lodge, a major landmark and potential major economic development factor for the region.
- Renovation of the Lodge was expected to create 150-200 jobs and once completed, the Lodge would employ approximately 150 people year-round

Rural Economic Development Funding (AB 912*)

- Provides \$1 billion over the next 20 years to rural communities to encourage business start-ups, relocation, development, and growth.

Telecommuter Forward! (Act 342)

- *Allows a local government to apply to PSC for certification as a Telecommuter Forward! Community, which highlights communities that offer infrastructure and opportunities to work remotely.*

Increase number of Assistant District Attorneys (SB 54—ASA 2*)

- Significantly impacts rural counties that have heavy caseloads and fewer resources to staff these positions.

Sparsity Aid (Act 141)

- Provides over \$130 million in additional resources to public schools over the next six years; on top of the over \$600 million that was put into public schools through the biennial budget.
- Begins solving inequities for low-revenue school districts.

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Veterans

Wisconsin is home to over 400,000 United States veterans who have dedicated their lives to our freedom. As a thankful state, we strive to provide necessary services through vital programs such as the Veterans Assistance Program, Veterans Employment and Entrepreneurship Grant Program, Veterans Outreach Efforts, Department of Veterans Affairs Tuition Reimbursement Program, and more.

Veterans are an essential part of our communities and deserve our thanks. As a state, we can and will continue to do more to serve those who have served.

Budget

- Provides additional funding to Disabled American Veterans (\$160,000). These funds will be used to purchase additional transportation options for disabled veterans.
- Establishes a peer-run respite center that provides services to veterans who suffer from mental health or addiction issues (\$450,000 PR).
- Requires the UW System and WTCS to provide academic credit for certain military training.
- Provides a nonresident tuition exemption for students who are in the National Guard or a reserve unit of the U.S. Armed Forces who meet certain criteria.

Legislation:

Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program (VORP) (Act 295)

- Continues the very successful pilot of the VORP program to provide outreach, mental health services, and support to veterans with a mental health condition or substance abuse disorder. Provides \$179,980 in 2017-18 and \$720,000 in 2018-19 to fund the program.

Green Alerts for Missing Veterans (Act 175)

- Provides an additional tool for law enforcement to respond more quickly and with greater urgency when a veteran who is known to be at-risk goes missing.

Benefits for National Guard members on State Active Duty (Act 274)

- Increases and aligns award amounts for death benefits, reemployment rights, and continuation pay for National Guard and state defense force members activated on state active duty.

National Guard Tuition Reimbursement (Act 123)

- Ensures that National Guard Members will be reimbursed the full cost of tuition under the Wisconsin National Guard Tuition Grant Program, including differential tuition. This bill specifies that differential tuition must be included in calculating the maximum resident undergraduate tuition when the Dept of Military Affairs (DMA) determines the amount of the grants.



Protections for National Guard and Reserve Military who are also students (AB 769*)

- This bill protects university students who are reservists and are called into active duty. If a student is called into active duty the Bill requires all higher education institutions to offer an accelerated course of study to complete the work or provide a tuition refund, or reenrollment with no additional costs in any classes missed.

Service-connected disability for disabled-veteran owned businesses (Act 122)

- Aligns Wisconsin law with federal standards for certifying disabled-veteran owned businesses, now allowing qualification for a veteran with a service-connected disability rating from 0% to 100%. Previously, Wisconsin's standard was higher than the federal government's.

Veteran Farmer Assistance and Outreach Program and Veteran Farmer Logotype (Act 121)

- Requires the creation of a program to integrate veterans into the field of agriculture and support veterans currently working in agriculture, including immediate families of a veteran who died in service, missing in action, or who died as a result of a service-connected disability.
- Requires DVA, in consultation with DATCP, to create a logotype to identify agricultural products produced by farmers who are certified as veterans or immediate family of the veteran groups mentioned above.

Sales and Use Tax Exemption for State Veterans Organizations (Act 190)

- Creates a Wisconsin sales and use tax exemption for tangible personal property and taxable services sold to a state veterans organization, as well as a sales and use tax exemption for building materials purchased by a contractor and transferred to a state veterans organization.

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Foxconn

The Foxconn legislation paves the way for the largest direct foreign investment in United States' history. This landmark legislation ensures that Wisconsin taxpayers are protected with safeguards that preserve both the environment and our tax dollars. Key to the deal is the fact that the state does not pay out any tax credits until after Foxconn has made its investment and created new jobs in the state. The construction of the transformational development project is Wisconsin focused with more than 90 percent of the initial construction work from Wisconsin workers. Foxconn is also investing in Wisconsin by creating two innovation centers in Green Bay and Eau Claire. Wisconsin Valley is stretching way beyond southeast Wisconsin.

Foxconn is Moving Wisconsin Forward

- World's largest contract manufacturer of electronics.
- Site will manufacture LCD panels & finished products.
- Construction has begun at the Mt. Pleasant site less than a year after the Memorandum of Understanding was signed (July 27, 2017.)

Foxconn/Wisconsin Valley is transformational

- State's largest economic development project (size of 15 Lambeau fields.)
- Located in Mt. Pleasant in eastern Racine County.
- Largest manufacturing campus in the world.
- \$10 billion capital investment from Foxconn.
- 13,000 jobs.
- Average salary \$53,875 plus benefits.
- 10,000 construction jobs, 6,000 indirect construction jobs.
- At least 22,000 indirect and induced jobs throughout the state.

Investment that will pay dividends

- Projected to add \$51 billion to WI gross domestic product over 15 years.
- Economic impact of \$18 returned for \$1 invested by state.
- Estimated \$11.1 billion economic impact (direct, indirect & induced.)

Boost for Wisconsin businesses

- 90 percent of contractors for initial site work are from Wisconsin, 10 percent based in Racine.
- First phase of bidding tops \$100 million, spread across 25-30 companies.
- Supply chain needs met by WI companies estimated at \$1.4 billion.
- Increase population, housing boom impacting all kinds of Wisconsin businesses (like restaurants).



Performance-based incentive package protects taxpayers while growing a new high-tech economy

- Not a dollar will be paid out until a shovel is in the ground or jobs (with salaries between \$30,000 and \$100,000) are created.
- Can only collect construction-related tax credit if it creates up to 8,450 jobs through 2025.
- There are claw-back provisions in place in existing law in order to protect taxpayers if Foxconn doesn't fulfill its promises to Wisconsin.
- CEO Terry Gou has pledged to personally back 25% of the amount that would be refunded to the state if company defaulted. Its parent company would back the rest.

Environmental protections are not waived; process is streamlined

- Air/water quality standards still must be followed.
- Federal laws will apply: discharges into wetlands remain subject to federal approval into federal navigable waters.
- Enhanced wetland protections with stronger mitigation: Must create two new wetlands for every one that is impacted (general mitigation is 1.2:1) and as close to the site as possible.
- DNR reports more than 80 percent of emissions in the air in Racine County is produced outside of Wisconsin.
- The DNR is requiring Foxconn to employ the best available pollution-control technology.

Sources: <https://www.foxconnracinecounty.com/>
<https://wisconnvalley.wi.gov/pages/home.aspx>



Transportation

Transportation infrastructure is an essential component to the state's economic prosperity and quality of life for its citizens. However, five independent studies, including a state audit, confirm that our roads are deteriorating, there are construction delays and revenue is on the decline. While more than \$1.5 billion in savings at the DOT has been found since 2011, every efficiency needs to be considered. Assembly Republicans have long advocated for a long-term sustainable solution for transportation funding in order to meet the current and future needs of our state.

In this past budget, we made a significant investment in local infrastructure and reduced bonding levels to the lowest level in a decade. Ensuring everyone pays their fair share, we created a \$75 hybrid-electric vehicle fee as well as a \$100 electric vehicle fee. These changes are vital steps on the path to a sustainable solution, but there is much more work to be done.

Budget

Reducing bonding while funding roads

- \$402 million in total bonding.
- \$150 million in transportation bonds.
- \$252 million in GPR bonds or 1-94 South.

Fair Share Fees for Road Use

- Creates a \$75 fee for hybrid-electric vehicles and a \$100 fee for electric vehicles.

Reducing Waste and Improving Government Efficiency

- Federal Aid "Swap"- Federal aid comes with more stringent and costly regulatory requirements. By "swapping out" state money for federal money on certain projects, Wisconsin will be able to save valuable transportation dollars and remove costly and unnecessary federal regulations and red-tape from local highway projects.
- Requires DOT to eliminate 200 positions (most of which are currently vacant) and use related funding to support the transportation fund.
- Eliminates state prevailing wage law for state building projects and state highway projects.

Improving Local Roads

- Largest increase in local aids in 20 years.
- Increases aid to Local Bridge Improvement Fund by \$10 million over the biennium.
- Provides \$10 million increase over biennium to Local Roads Improvement Fund.
- Increases funding for the general transportation aids (GTA) program by \$56 million over the biennium which equates to a 12.9% increase for counties and an 8.5% increase for municipalities.

Transit Capital Assistance Program

- Creates a statewide transit capital assistance program to provide competitive grants to municipalities for the purpose of replacing public transit vehicles using proceeds of Volkswagen settlement.



Legislation:

Reforming the Department of Transportation (Act 247)

- Implements legislative recommendations from the Legislative Audit Bureau's January 2017 report evaluating the DOT's management of the state highway program. The bill clarifies when providing major project cost estimates to the Transportation Projects Commission (TPC), estimates must include all costs associated with the project, including all costs before enumeration; all engineering costs; environmental studies costs; costs paid by another DOT program; the expected date of completion; and an estimate of the effects of inflation.
- Adds an additional requirement to DOT's semi-annual status report to the TPC to include the full-project cost estimate of each project as of the date of the TPC's approval of the project.
- Requires the semi-annual report to treat each project separately and provide the following information: all project costs at enumeration, all costs to date, all projected costs to completion. Including an explanation of any difference between the full project cost estimates as of the date of enumeration and as of the date of preparation of the report, and DOT's opinion as to whether the project will be completed as originally scheduled.



Good Government

Assembly Republicans continue to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars by being fiscally responsible in our budgeting and with the legislation we pass. The previous budget ended with a healthy surplus and we continue to put money aside in the rainy day fund, which is now at the largest amount in state history. Our state's bond rating has been upgraded and Wisconsin has one of the best funded retirement systems in the country. We are committed to reducing size of government and have eliminated hundreds of unnecessary positions in state government over the last several budgets.

Budget

Decreasing the Size of Government

- Reduces the state's FTE count by over 432 positions in each year, compared to the Governor's budget recommendation.
- Spends nearly \$500M all funds less than the Governor's recommended budget.

Ensuring Fiscally Responsible Use of Taxpayer Dollars

- Rainy Day Fund of \$284M—largest rainy day fund in state history.
- Does not use a lapse to balance the budget -- this ensures increased Legislative oversight of spending.
- Audits government money going to Planned Parenthood.
- Eliminates the state prevailing wage law for state building projects and state highway projects, as well as retain the current law prohibition against local governments enacting or administering their own prevailing wage laws.
- Protects the state's fully funded pension.

Legislation

Base Budget Review Reports (Act 212)

- Requires all state agencies, the legislature, and the courts to submit a base budget review report in the even-numbered year in every biennium to proactively address the increases in spending by state government.

Government Lease Reform and Transparency (Act 132)

- Requires DOA, when entering into or renewing any state lease, to conduct a cost-benefit analysis to determine whether the space being considered should continue to be rented, purchased, or if there is another comparable space in the area.
- Further, if the proposed lease has an annual rent of more than \$500,000, it must be signed by the Secretary of DOA and DOA must submit the proposed lease, the cost-benefit analysis, and a summary of comparable lease rates to JFC for a 14 day passive review.

State Sign Procurement Reform (Act 146)

- Ensures that Wisconsin companies producing traffic signage are able to bid on state contracts in a fair and open process by requiring signage purchases by state agencies that exceed \$3,500 to be put out for a competitive bid.



Cutting Government Red Tape—Administrative Rule Reform

- **Reins Act (Act 57)**

- Changes the rule-making process to give the legislature the oversight it needs and citizens the voice they deserve. Among other reforms, it freezes new agency rules with a price tag of more than \$10 million until approved by the legislature and adds additional public scrutiny by requiring a public hearing on all new rules.

- **Scope Statement Expiration for Administrative Rules (Act 39)**

- Sunsets all scope statements after 30 months of being published in the Wisconsin Administrative Register (WAR) and sunset all approved scope statements that were published in the WAR 30 months after enactment of the bill. This will create more urgency for agencies to complete the rule promulgation process in a timely and transparent manner.

- **Continuation of Red Tape Review (Act 108)**

- Since beginning the process of reviewing all 1,736 chapters of our administrative code, we have reviewed 777 chapters. We have now established a process by which requires administrative code to be reviewed and either approved or eliminated by elected officials on a regular basis.

- **Red Tape Review Flagship (Act 108)**

- Establishes a way for state agencies to review their regulations on a regular basis, as well as organize a system to examine the impact of new acts on present legislation. This Act essentially operationalizes Red Tape Review initiatives into agencies' everyday practices to keep our code up-to-date.

- **Recount Reform—Eliminating Frivolous Recounts (Act 120)**

- Changes the recount threshold for a candidate who trails the leading candidate by no more than 1%. The law shortens the deadline for a recount in a presidential election by two business days. This recount reform will tighten the recount law and reduce the potential for frivolous recounts that take time away from other important public service duties.



Local Government

Local units of government are providers of many vital services to Wisconsin residents and are often the first to face the unique challenges and barriers to getting people the assistance they need. From the administration of health and welfare services to highway maintenance and the court system, the work of local governments touch almost every facet of an individual's everyday life.

Assembly Republicans made important investments to assist local governments from broadband expansion to rural fire and EMS reforms. We provided flexibilities as well that allow local governments to be more efficient and effective.

By the numbers

- Wisconsin is comprised of **72** counties, **1,253** towns, **190** cities, and **411** villages—all of which exist to provide general governmental services to their residents.
- Estimated county populations range from **4,236** (Menominee County) to **949,741** (Milwaukee County).
- **30 percent** of our 2017-19 State Budget (all funds) was allocated for local assistance (50% of our total general fund appropriations).

Budget

Investments in Broadband

- Invests another \$14 million in state funding for broadband expansion grants. Our goal is to have all corners of the state to acquire access to adequate internet service.

Furthering Investments in Transportation

- While there is still more to be done, the state budget increases the Local Bridge Improvement Fund by \$10 million in the 2017-2019 budget. We also provide a \$10 million increase to the Local Roads Improvement Fund over the biennium.

Cut taxes while continuing to hold local governments harmless

- The state budget repeals a portion of the burdensome personal property tax, but provides \$75 million to ensure local municipalities do not see a reduction in these tax revenues.

Flexibility and Efficiency for Counties

- The state budget allows counties to voluntarily enter into shared service agreements with each other to more efficiently and effectively deliver services to taxpayers. This capability helps county departments consolidate resources, build efficiencies, and improve the quality of service delivery.

Next Generation 911

- The budget provides approximately \$7 million annually, beginning in fiscal year 2019, for creation of a statewide 911 network. The creation of a statewide network is a critical first step towards upgrading Wisconsin's 911 system which so many lives depend on.



Fighting Addiction and Promoting Public Health

- **TAD Funding:** Increases funding for Treatment and Diversion programming by \$500,000 (in addition to \$2 million provided in 2017 Act 32.) This funding may be used to start a new drug treatment court or other kinds of TAD programming in counties that lack current programming.
- **PDMP Improvements:** Increases staff for the operations of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, the statewide program that tracks the movement of legal scheduled prescription medications.
 - This is another part of our continuing **H.O.P.E (Heroin, Opiate Prevention and Education) Agenda**. We had a Special Session in January 2017 dedicated to this topic and two additional HOPE bills passed in 2018. We have passed a total of 30 pieces of legislation that fight against the rampant opioid and drug crisis in our state.
- **Fighting Communicable Diseases:** Provides \$1 million to local public health departments for the control and prevention of communicable diseases throughout Wisconsin. This funding will assist county-based health and human services in researching and combating potentially dangerous outbreaks of infectious diseases.

Support for Child Welfare Services

- **Children and Family Aids Increase:** Increases funding for children and family aids, which assists counties with costs related to child abuse and neglect. (\$7.1M budget).
- **Expand Child Welfare Prevention Services:** Expands child welfare prevention services beyond Milwaukee County (current law restricts the program to Milwaukee County.) (\$7.8M budget).
- **Foster Care and Kinship Care Rate Increase:** Increases payments for the foster and kinship care programs, which provide safe homes for vulnerable youth, by 2.5% annually. (\$3M budget).

Overtime Beat Patrol Funding

- Supports local law enforcement efforts by providing \$1 million annually in grants to municipalities for overtime costs for beat patrol.

Increased Match for Service Award Program:

- Increases the state match for the state's Service Award Program to help assist municipalities in retaining volunteer fire fighters, EMTs, and first responders. Additionally, the budget modifies vesting requirements for volunteer fire/EMS personnel so they can now vest in the program after 15 years of service, instead of 20, and withdraw money at the age of 53, instead of age 60.

Legislation:

Modernizing and Streamlining Local Government Operations

- **Options for Consolidation of Health Departments:** Allows more local control for governing bodies that want to consolidate health departments. Provided there is an agreed on a budgetary method, this act allows them to use the budgetary process of their choosing. (Act 6)



- **More Control over Financial Decisions:** Permits local governments to make better financial decisions by removing the three year limitation for investments in financial institutions by local governments. This will allow local governments to invest surplus funds in local, secure institutions for projects that would not be feasible for over three years. (Act 78)
- **Flexibility for Insurance:** Allows a city council or village board to obtain a dishonesty insurance policy instead of requiring certain local officials to execute and file official bonds. This act makes the filing of official bonds permissive, not mandatory, as these municipalities will have a better understanding of their insurance needs. (Act 51)
- **Allowing for Donated Construction Improvements:** Allows local governments to accept donated improvements by providing a clear exemption from the competitive bidding process a private party who constructs improvements and then donates those materials and improvements to the local government after completion. (Act 167)

Giving Local Governments Authority to Address Contaminated Wells (Act 69)

- Allows a city, village, town or county to remediate a contaminated private well. It increases the statutory limit for grants through the well compensation grant program. The Act authorizes the local government to make loans to owners for remediation. In addition, the government entity can recover its costs or collect the loan repayment as a special charge or special assessment.

Focus on Foster Care

- Thanks to the bi-partisan work of the **Speaker's Task Force on Foster Care**, the legislature was able to pass 11 bills which together make improvements to the child welfare system, provide additional resources for foster children, and investments to support families in order to help prevent contact with the child welfare system in the first place. We understand not only the severe trauma inflicted upon children when they are placed in out of home care, but also the stress this naturally puts on local governments. This package of bills help improve multiple phases of the foster care system, and ultimately will help ensure our children, families, and communities are able to tackle this important issue.

Helping our First Responders, Law Enforcement and ADAs

- **Community Emergency Medical Services Program:** Creates a process for the development of a Community Emergency Medical Services program. Programs like these, for communities who choose to develop them, will help provide opportunities for non-emergency health services by community paramedics and EMTs to provide treatment and assistance outside of a hospital. Programs like these could help reduce hospital readmissions, help target at-risk populations, and provide more access for rural areas. (Act 66)
- **Rural Fire and EMS Reforms:** Allows dollars from the emergency medical services funding assistance program to be used for training and recertifying lower level Emergency Medical Responders/First Responder staff. This can help provide another recruitment tool for EMS departments. (Act 96)
- **Funding for ADAs:** Amendment to SB 54 provides funding for 53 assistant district attorney positions in 40 counties in order to better ensure our local officials have the tools and resources they need to properly prosecute crime (not taken up by the Senate).



Continued Focus on Alzheimer's Awareness

- Provides \$500,000 in grants to community programs across the state to raise awareness for Alzheimer's and dementia resources. By raising awareness at the local levels, we can help our communities better understand the signs of this disease and what options for assistance are available to them. (Act 186)

Recount Reform

- Change the recount threshold for a candidate who trails the leading candidate by no more than 1%. The law shortens the deadline for a recount in a presidential election by two business days. This recount reform will tighten the recount law and reduce the potential for frivolous recounts that take time away from other important public service duties. (Act 120)

Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit

- Raises the amount of credits that can be claimed per project under the Historic Tax Credit (HTC) program from \$500,000 to \$3.5 million, starting July 1st, 2018. Raising the limit will increase the feasibility of more projects across the state while still ensuring cost controls on the program. This program also helps to increase property values while reducing blight through the revitalization of often vacant buildings. (Act 280)



Education

Every child, regardless of where they live, deserves to have the best possible education. This session, Assembly Republicans delivered on our commitment to give students an effective education. Once again, K-12 schools is the largest funded program in the general fund and K-12 schools received the largest amount ever in actual dollars. Our efforts also focused on retaining and rewarding great teachers. While we work to improve our schools and address the needs of diverse districts, we should be proud of the educational successes with some the highest graduation rates in the country and high ACT scores.

K-12 Education

Budget

Spends more Money Directly in the Classroom

- Increases state aid to school districts by over \$634M.
 - Provides an additional \$200/pupil in FY18 and \$204/pupil in FY19.
 - This amounts to an increase of \$604 per student over the biennium.
 - A classroom of 20 students will see a total increase of \$8,340 over the biennium. (reference LFB)
- Protects taxpayers' investment by directing the additional money to the classroom.
- Provides matching funds to help schools purchase computers for all high school students (\$9.2M).

Give Every Child the Tools they need to succeed in School and Life

- Creates a new Performance Funding aid program to help failing school districts improve (\$3.7M).
 - Creates a new program to improve summer school programming in failing schools so that students who are falling behind get caught up (\$1.4M).
- Continues funding the Robotics League Participation Grant program created in the last session (\$500,000).
- Increases the score needed to pass the state civics exam.
- Provides funds for students to earn certificates for training and proficiency in information technology and computer skills such as the Microsoft Office Suite, providing a “leg-up” when entering the workforce. (\$1.75M)

Focus on Developing, Retaining, and Rewarding Great Teachers

- Create a lifetime license for teachers and administrators that complete six semesters of successful experience.
- Simplifies the licensure system to make it more flexible and responsive to meet individual school district workforce needs.
- Provides \$1M to connect future teachers with rural school districts facing teacher shortages.
- Funds a teacher recruitment and training program for school paraprofessionals looking to become fully licensed teachers. (\$500,000)
- Provides funding for an innovative School Leadership Loan Program to prepare students for careers as principals and superintendents in our schools. (\$500,000)



Ensure Every Family, Everywhere in Wisconsin has Effective Educational Options

- Continues to provide parents with choices and options on how and where to educate their children by increasing the family income threshold to 220% of the federal poverty limit for students in the statewide choice program.
- Authorizes any UW campus or Technical College to establish a charter school.
- Provides funding for Wisconsin Reading Corps which works to improve students' reading skills through one-on-one tutoring. (\$1M)
- Provides funding for College Possible, a program that helps low-income, at-risk students attend college and graduate. (\$1M)
- Increases access and flexibility for participation in the Special Needs Scholarship Program.

Expand Educational Services to Students

- Fully funds Special Education Transitions Incentive Grants which rewards school districts for connecting students with special needs to meaningful employment or postsecondary education. (\$6.1M)
 - Creates a new Special Education Transition Readiness Grant to help school districts build the capacity to connect students to potential jobs and postsecondary education. (\$1.5M)
- Increases the reimbursement rate for the High Cost Special Education Aid Program to 90% (currently 70%) of all costs over \$30,000 per pupil. (\$1.5M)
- Creates two new aid programs related to student mental health:
 - School Mental Health Aid to reimburse schools for costs related to providing mental health services to students (\$3M); and,
 - Community and School Mental Health Collaboration Grants to help schools connect with area health providers to meet students' needs. (\$3.25M)
- Provides funding for targeted mental health services and counseling in five elementary school in Milwaukee (will be administered through DCF.) (\$500,000)

Assistance for Rural Schools—Builds on Previous Work Done to Help Rural Schools to Ensure All Students have the Same Opportunities to be Successful

- Fully funds the sparsity aid program and creates a new stop-gap mechanism to prevent school districts from losing sparsity aid from one year to the next. (\$1.6M)
- Expands eligibility for high-cost transportation aid so that more districts may receive aid and fully funds the program. (\$10.4M)

Legislation:

Increases in Sparsity Aid and Low-Spending School Districts (Act 141)

- Targets aid to frugal, low-spending school districts by increasing the low-revenue ceiling to \$9,400 per pupil by the second year of the biennium and \$100 each year until it reaches \$9,800 per pupil. Additionally, increases sparsity aid payments from \$300 per pupil to \$400 per pupil.
 - This will direct over \$23M in additional state aid to 109 low-spending school districts in this biennium.
 - Directs \$92M to 200+ school districts over the next 6 years.
- Provides educational excellence for every student, regardless of their zip code. This will ensure our most rural school districts have the necessary resources to provide top-notch education.



Funding for Dual Enrollment Courses (Act 206)

- Creates a grant program to assist high school teachers to meet the minimum qualification requirements of the Higher Learning Commission for eligibility to teach dual enrollment courses. (\$500,000)
- Helps ensure that our high school students continue to be able to take courses for college credit while in high school. This will in turn lower their tuition costs for college and will get them into the workforce faster.

Aid for Online Summer Classes (Act 151)

- Expands the online summer school or interim classes that qualify for state aid. The expanded list includes any class that the school board determines would fulfill a high school graduation requirement, including a class in health education.
- Gives flexibility to the school district in offering courses and flexibility to students for scheduling their courses, especially in rural districts where offerings may be limited and may conflict during the school year.

School Choice Program Uniformity (Act 36)

- Increases accountability for choice schools and streamline their operation. Addresses the discrepancies in the operation of the four school choice programs in our state and create uniformity in the way the programs are administered. This bill increases accountability of choice schools and creates background checks for teachers, as well as simplifying the administration process for DPI.

Financial Literacy (Act 94)

- Requires DPI to publish an inventory of pupil data elements collected across different program areas. (AB 71*)
- Requires the State Superintendent to provide guidance and training to school districts and schools in implementing and administering a data privacy and security plan and in complying with state and federal laws governing privacy and security of pupil data. (AB 72*)
- Creates additional transparency regarding standardized testing that is administered to students in our schools. Requires a school district to provide a clear informational inventory of all standardized assessments required by 1) the federal government, 2) the State of Wisconsin, and 3) the local school district. Also requires further information related to the assessments, such as specific grade levels, expected date of administration, purpose, duration, and the process to obtain an opt-out. (AB 300*)
- Ensures parents and guardians of students in all grades between 3-12 have equal ability to opt their child(ren) out of state mandated testing. This eliminates the disparity and provides certainty for both the parent and the school district. (AB 304*)

Asterisk () indicates legislation passed by the Assembly but not the Senate*



Higher Education

Assembly Republicans are providing students with the tools to succeed in their future careers and in life by providing educational opportunities at an affordable cost. Our commitment to higher education is reflected in our investments in the world-class university system and technical colleges. We are committed to keeping college affordable by continuing the UW tuition freeze for two more years while also providing accountability to taxpayers and protecting free speech.

By the numbers

Tech College Information

- **16** colleges, serving more than **326,000** students each year
- **93%** of tech college graduates are employed within 6 months of graduation, **79%** in a job related to what they studied
- **93%** of tech college graduates stay to live and work in Wisconsin
- Median starting salary for all credential types is **\$37,437**
- Median starting salary for an associate (2-year) degree holder is **\$41,000**
- Prior graduates have reported that, within 5 years of graduation, average salaries have increased by **54%**
 - Grads are not only getting jobs – they are keeping them, and continuing to grow in their chosen professions.

UW System Information

- 13 universities; a unified, two-year college system with 13 campuses; and a statewide extension. The UW system is one of the largest merged systems in the country, enrolling approximately **179,000** students.

Budget

Preparing the Workforce of Tomorrow

- Increases funding to UW System by \$34,250,000.
- Creates a School of Engineering at UW-Green Bay.
- Expands the UW Carbone Cancer Center to bring access to precision medicine to more cancer patients statewide. (\$980,000)
- Increases funding for the need-based Wisconsin Grant scholarships, helping low income students get the training they need in the Wisconsin Technical College System. (\$4 million)

Controlling the Cost

- Freezes tuition for resident undergraduate students in both years. At the end of the 2017-19 biennium, tuition will have been frozen for six consecutive years, saving the average student \$6,000 over four years.
- Freezes allocable segregated fees and directs the Board of Regents to develop system-wide policies governing allocable segregated fees.
- Creates the Early College Credit program to help high school students take college courses while in high school. Based on recent enrollment data, this could save students up to \$12 million in college costs annually.



- Maintains the current performance funding law for the Wisconsin Technical College System. 30% of state aid to WTCS will continue to be distributed based upon individual technical college's' performance on a variety of performance metrics.

Taxpayer Accountability

- Requires an independent audit of the UW System.
- Creates an outcomes-based funding model based on the system-wide goals to: grow and ensure student access, improve and excel at student progress and completion, expand contributions to the workforce, and enhance operation efficiency and effectiveness.
- Approves a faculty workload study to ensure students have adequate classroom instruction.

Expanding Campus Infrastructure

- Over \$209 million in investments on campuses, including:
 - A new engineering facility at UW-Platteville.
 - Residence hall renovations and additions at UW-Eau Claire, UW-Milwaukee, and UW-River Falls.
 - Remodels the Student Union at UW-Parkside.
 - Northwest Quadrant Renovation at UW-Milwaukee.
 - System-wide classroom renovations and IT improvement.

Protect Free Speech and Academic Freedom

- Creates the Tommy G. Thompson Center on Public Leadership at UW Madison with a directive to facilitate research, teaching, and outreach of needed policy reforms regarding effective public leadership to improve the practice of American government.
- Directs the UW System to review and revise policies related to academic freedom.

Legislation

Wisconsin Merit Scholarship Program (Act 314)

- Creates a merit-based scholarship for students attending the UW System, valued at \$5,000 each.
- These scholarships will help retain our best and brightest students.

Tools of the Trade apprenticeship grants (AB 808*)

- Expands this successful program by providing an additional \$100,000 per academic year to assist technical college students who have undertaken apprenticeship training courses in conjunction with instruction.

Improve the Technical Excellence Higher Education Scholarship Program (Act 91)

- Addresses several areas of the program eligibility that were out of alignment, smooths the process to make it better for students and more efficient overall. This helps existing scholarship recipients and provides more flexibility to current and future scholarship holders by allowing them to possibly regain their eligibility status, and improve the Technical Excellence Scholarship program overall.

Improve Transfer Policies for College Credit (Act 215)

- Allows students who have mastered subject material in a college-level course taken during high school to test out of taking what would essentially amount to the same class their first year in college. This is a cost-saving measure as it may help students avoid paying college prices to retake certain classes.

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Employee College Affordability Act (Act 197)

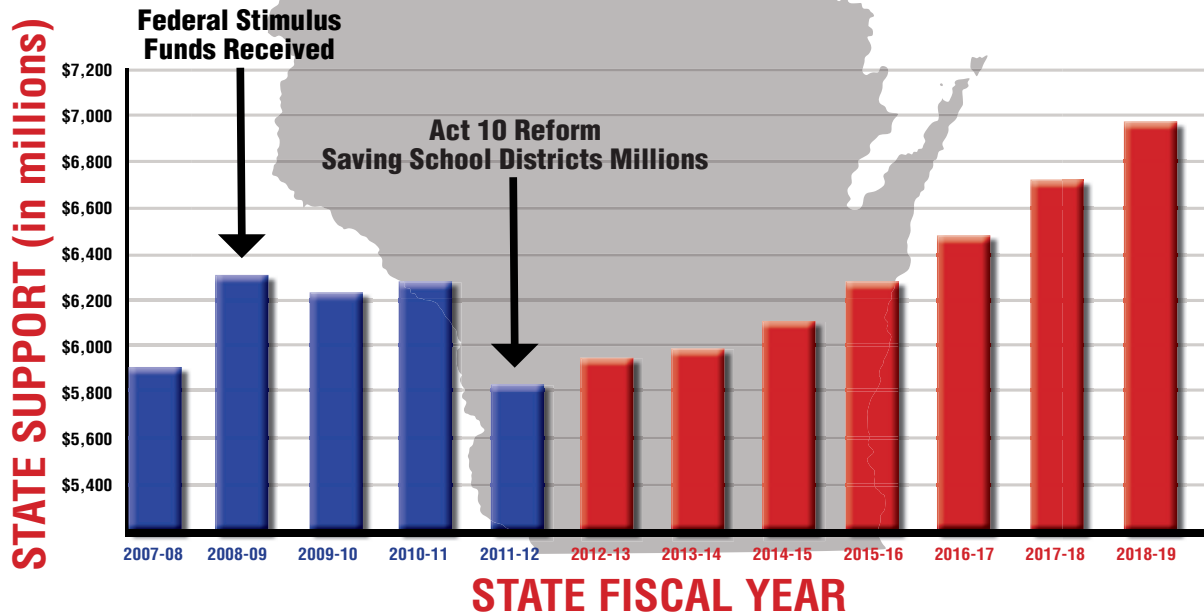
- Allows employers to contribute an individual’s Wisconsin 529 account and in return receive a non-refundable 25% tax credit on every dollar contributed up to the maximum annual allowance. This will give students another way to save money for higher education and will allow employers an additional tool to recruit and retain employees.

Free Expression on campuses (AB 299*)

- Directs the UW Board of Regents to develop and adopt a policy on free expression, allowing students and faculty to express themselves as the first amendment permits, and implements disciplinary measures for anyone who engages in violent and disorderly conduct that interferes with the free expression of others.

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STATE SUPPORT FOR K-12 EDUCATION



School Safety

March 2018 Special Session on School Safety Initiatives

Creation of the Office of School Safety (Act 143)

- Creates the Office of School Safety within the Department of Justice. The office will be tasked with all of the following:
 - Creating model practices for school safety, in conjunction with other organizations
 - Coordinating with schools and DOA to compile blueprints and GIS maps for all schools, which will be kept confidential unless requested by a law enforcement agency during an emergency situation.
 - Offer training to school staff on school safety.

School Safety Grant Program (Act 143)

- Creates a grant program, operated by DOJ, for public, private, and tribal schools to improve school safety, including upgrades to school buildings, equipment and facilities. DOJ receives \$100 million to award to grant applicants.

Mandatory Reporting for Threats of School Violence (Act 143)

- Current law requires that certain professionals who, within the course of their duties, suspect abuse or neglect of children must report that neglect. Act 143 expands to this same list of individuals the requirement to report suspected intent to commit an act of violence involving a dangerous weapon or explosive in or targeting a school. School boards must require every employee of the school district to receive training that they are required to report such behavior.

Strengthen School Safety Plan Requirements (Act 143)

- Requires that all school boards and governing bodies of private schools have a school safety plan in effect for each school building and facility. Before creating or updating plans, the school must work with local law enforcement to conduct an on-site safety assessment of each school building, site, and facility that is regularly occupied by pupils. Schools must drill students annually in the proper response to a school violence event, and evaluate the drill.

Additional Assembly-Only Initiatives

Expanding and Strengthening Background Checks (ASA 1 to AB 1031*)

- Requires long guns to go through a Wisconsin DOJ background check, just like the process for purchasing hand guns currently, but at no new cost to the consumer. Additionally, requires DOJ to send Wisconsin data, which is more robust, to the federal government to integrate into the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS). Once the National Instant Criminal Background Check System is fixed and utilizing the state data, the state can consider going through just NICS system.
- This is about keeping guns out of the hands of people who already are unable to obtain one legally.

Notoriety Prevention (AA1 to AA1 to ASA1 to AB 1031*)

- Prohibits someone who commits a heinous crime from profiting from it.
- Any proceeds can still go to restitution for victims or charity, but the perpetrator cannot get any benefit.



24/7 Anonymous Tip Line (AA1 to ASA1 to AB 1031*)

- We have seen tragic cases where people have reported suspicious behavior of a person who goes on to commit a mass act of violence or cases where multiple tips went uninvestigated.
- Ensures people who are reporting tips have someone accountable to the public who will follow up in all cases. No one will fall through the cracks.

Other Initiatives to Better Protect Students in our Schools:

Increased Mental Health Resources in Schools (2017-2019 Budget)

- Creates two new aid programs related to student mental health:
 - School Mental Health Aid to reimburse schools for costs related to providing mental health services to students. (\$3M)
 - Provides Community and School Mental Health Collaboration Grants to help schools connect with area health providers to meet students' needs. (\$3.25M)
- Provides funding for targeted mental health services and counseling in five elementary school in Milwaukee (will be administered through DCF.) (\$500,000)
- Experts estimate mental health disorders often go undiagnosed and as many as 80 percent of students do not get the mental health care they need. (Association for Children's Mental Health)

We must do all that we can to keep guns out of the wrong hands. The Assembly approved several tough-on crime measures.

- Made straw purchases of firearms illegal
- Four-year mandatory minimum sentence for repeat violent offenders who commit crimes with a firearm.
- Elevated carjacking to a felony.
- Requires the revocation of extended supervision, probation or parole if an individual is charged with a crime.
- Provided \$2 million to support police overtime costs on beat patrols in cities.

Creating a safe environment

- Creation of Bullying Prevention Grants (2017-2019 Budget)
 - \$150,000 GPR annually for training and online bullying prevention curriculum for students in K through 8.
 - LFB memo: 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey documented % of students who were bullied.
 - 22.7% of Wisconsin high school pupils reported being bullied on school property during the 12 months prior to the survey, including 28.6% of pupils aged 15 or younger.
 - 17.6% of high school pupils reported having been electronically bullied during the previous 12 months, including 18.4% of pupils aged 15 or younger.

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Crime and Public Safety

This session the Wisconsin State Assembly continued to make tremendous progress in the areas of criminal justice and public safety. From enabling law enforcement officers and prosecutors to strengthening criminal laws, authorities now have more tools to go after crimes that range from repeat drunk driving to sex trafficking. Serious reforms were made in how to treat and rehabilitate drug users and the youth justice system saw a new forward-thinking model implemented for handling juvenile offenders.

Budget

Fighting Addiction through Treatment & Diversion Programs

- Increases funding for Treatment and Diversion Programming by \$500,000 (in addition to \$2M provided in 2017 Act 32.) The funding may be used to start a new drug treatment court, or it may be used for other kinds of TAD programming in counties that lack current programming.
- With the implementation of this budget and the recent special session bill, we have added a total of \$5.8M annually to TAD in our state.
- These programs are more cost effective than incarceration and, if the program is completed, are proven to help over 60% of individuals suffering with an addiction to achieve long-term recovery.

Support Local Law Enforcement through Beat Patrol Overtime Grants

- Provides \$1M annually in grants to municipalities for beat patrol overtime grants so communities can deploy officers when and where they are needed most.

Funding For DNA Analysis Kits

- Increases the expenditure authority of DOJ's crime laboratories and DNA analysis with a continuing appropriation by \$1M PR annually. Increased funding will address the backlog of DNA testing kits and keep current DNA crime analysis up to date.

Internet Crimes Against Children

- Provides \$750,000 annually to DOJ's Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) appropriation to better protect our youth from predators online.

Additional Funding for DCI Overtime

- Additional funding of \$558,900 annually for overtime for special agents at DCI. These agents are vital in handling our most complex and important criminal investigations in Wisconsin.

DOJ Discretionary Funds Oversight

- Requires a JFC passive review of all of DOJ's discretionary settlement funds prior to being spent by the Department.
- The DOJ is the only state agency that is able to spend its discretionary funds without any legislative oversight. This is especially concerning because these dollars are accumulated through lawsuits funded by Wisconsin taxpayers. The legislature will now have oversight of the funds to ensure they are being spent in the best possible way for the benefit of the state.



District Attorneys and Public Defenders

- Increases pay-progression funding by \$3.6 million over the biennium to reduce turnover and retain and compensate state prosecutors so that our counties have adequate funds to prosecute criminals.
- Adopts innovative ideas to providing government services by converting the State Public Defender to a block grant, while retaining oversight of agency expenditures. Increased Pay Progression by \$2.9 million to provide effective representation and control long-term costs by avoiding more expensive private bar reimbursement.

Inmate Rehabilitation and Re-Entry Programs to Reduce Recidivism

- Increases funding for Windows to Work and increased the number of sites at which the program can operate. (\$1M annually) Windows to Work is a pre- and post-release jobs program conducted in partnership with the Department of Workforce Development's Workforce Development Boards for medium and high risk offenders.
- Directs DOC to design an intensive alcohol abuse treatment and job placement program.
- Increases funding for the Opening Avenues to Reentry Success (OARS) program so it can expand to Eau Claire, Langlade, Lincoln, Menominee, and Shawano counties. OARS currently provides intensive case management and mental health services to seriously mentally ill offenders in 37 counties.
- Expands and increases staffing for the earned release program for eligible inmates who successfully complete substance abuse treatment programs. Additionally, approves funding and new positions for new health services units at Columbia, Oshkosh, and Taycheedah Correctional Institutions.

Juvenile Corrections

- Adds funding for more mental health treatment personnel at Copper Lake School.
- Adds positions at state juvenile treatment facilities to improve staff to inmate ratios and to conform to nationally recognized best-practices for mediation administration.

Directs DOC to Develop Smart and Strategic Long-Term Initiatives

- **Geriatric Prison Facility** - Provides funding for a geriatric specific prison that will help control costs and improve healthcare for aging inmates.
- **Long-term Planning on Correctional Facilities** - Improves Governor's proposal for a comprehensive, long-range master plan concerning DOC facilities by including a 9-person committee, including 6 legislators. Requires a report to the standing committees by September 15, 2018.

Legislation

Bans "Straw Purchases" and Enhances Penalties for Repeat Felons (Act 145)

- Another step towards reducing gun crime and locking up repeat offenders was taken with this legislation makes it more difficult for criminals to get guns through "straw purchases" and provides mandatory minimum sentences for gun crimes by those previously convicted of a felony.



Enhanced Victim's Rights Protections - Marsy's Law (Enrolled Joint Resolution)

- This joint resolution was passed and enrolled on the first of two consecutive legislative sessions before it can become a constitutional amendment that will provide additional protections, oversight, and feedback to victims of crimes in Wisconsin.

Supervised Release of Sexually Violent Persons (Act 184)

- Protects communities by restricting a court from placing sexually violent offenders on release into counties they did not originate from. It also requires more transparency from the DHS, to the communities, when the DHS is preparing its supervised release plan. This legislation will provide greater local oversight of sexually violent offenders upon release which will allow local authorities to provide the public with the utmost protection and safety in these situations.

Administrative Subpoenas for Human Trafficking (Act 173)

- Allows faster response time by the DOJ and authorities in certain circumstances of human trafficking so they may rapidly react to fast developing situations.

Increased Penalties for Child Neglect (Act 283)

- Wisconsin previously had an ill-defined definition of "neglect." This legislation clearly defines neglect of a child, making it easier for prosecutors to go after actual neglect cases. Additionally, there are increased penalties for those who neglect to care for our most at-risk population—children.

Tougher Penalties for Repeat Drunk Drivers (Act 172)

- Makes the roads and pedestrians safer by increasing penalties for repeat drunk drivers. Under this legislation a 4th offense—committed within 15 years of the 3rd offense—results in a permanent revocation of the offenders driving privileges if certain aggravating conditions are met.

Safe-Ride Advertising (Act 125)

- Allows Safe-Ride grant recipients to use grant funds for advertising. This program provides a ride home to a person who is suspected of having a blood alcohol content over the legal limit. Ultimately, as awareness of the program grows, the use of Safe-Ride will continue to grow, further reducing drunk driving in Wisconsin.

Fentanyl Analogs (Act 60)

- Adds all fentanyl analogs—a dangerous opiate—to the list of schedule 1 controlled substances which will help keep this dangerous drug, and its many derivatives, out of the hands of drug users.

Tougher Penalties for Sex Trafficking (Act 128)

- Makes patronizing a prostitute a felony if the person patronizes someone under the age of 18. It is a felony whether the person doing the patronizing knew the age of the girl or not. Too often sex trafficking victims are underage persons and this legislation provides an enhanced punishment for the person patronizing said victim.



Emergency Dispatcher Bystander CPR (Act 296)

- Requires public safety answering points, in appropriate circumstances, to provide telephonic assistance on administering cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) in order to assure everyone who calls emergency dispatch will have the most medical help they can receive.

Enhanced Bail Requirements for Dangerous Criminals (AJR 93*)

- This proposed constitutional amendment that passed the Assembly makes bail tougher to get for dangerous criminals and keep them off of our streets until trial.

Increased Commitment for Serious Juvenile Offenders (Act 308)

- Increases the term of commit for the most serious juvenile offenders under the Serious Juvenile Offenders Program so that these troubled youth can get the rehabilitation they need and be kept from the streets where they will re-offend.

Grants for Treatment and Diversion Programs (Act 351)

- Under the Treatment Alternatives and Diversion program, the Department of Justice (DOJ) provides grants to counties to provide alternatives to prosecution and incarceration for criminal offenders who abuse alcohol or other drugs. This act applies the program to the tribes.

Juvenile Justice Reform (Act 185)

- This bi-partisan landmark legislation completely revamps the states approach to juvenile justice by using a local county-based model for housing juvenile offenders.
- It puts the state on a path to close the Lincoln Hills/Copper Lakes juvenile prison and transition current populations to county-run secured residential care centers for children and youth, or a new state facility for the most serious offenders.
- Creates a bi-partisan committee to map the details for the most comprehensive youth rehabilitative services the state can offer.

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HOPE Agenda

Wisconsin continues to lead in combatting heroin and prescription drug abuse, and this session has been no exception with the combined efforts of the passage of 13 bills as part of the HOPE Agenda, progress and funding for HOPE initiatives in the state budget, and the formation of the Governor's Task Force on Opioid Abuse. We continued to tackle the tough issues of this epidemic such as access to treatment and the stigma attached to addiction. The HOPE Agenda, which began in 2013, now consists of 30 laws total, all of which have been approved with broad bipartisan support in both houses of the legislature. There is still much more to do, but Republicans in the Assembly should be very proud of continued efforts on this important issue.

The Problem

- “The number of Wisconsin citizens who die as a result of drug overdose now exceeds the number of those who die from motor vehicle crashes, as well as suicide, breast cancer, colon cancer, firearms, influenza, or HIV. Opioid-related overdose deaths more than tripled in Wisconsin from 194 deaths in 2003 to 622 deaths in 2014. They are now a leading cause of injury deaths in Wisconsin. Prescription opioid pain relievers such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, and methadone contributed to about one-half of the total drug overdose deaths, and heroin contributes to about one-third.”-- *Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Sept. 27, 2016, issuing a Public Health Advisory*

Our Reforms are Working

- Comparing the first quarter of 2018 to the same time in 2015, Wisconsin saw a nearly 30 percent decrease in opioid prescriptions.
- By reporting and tracking prescriptions and the patients that are receiving them, we have seen a 47 percent reduction in “doctor shopping.”

Budget

- Increases staff support for the operations of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP).
- Increases funding for TAD programming by \$500,000.

2017 Special Session: 11 Bills

Opioid Antagonists in Schools (Act 29)

- Allows school personnel with the proper training to administer an opioid antagonist if a person on school grounds is experiencing an overdose. These lifesaving drugs include epinephrine (epi-pen) for treating an allergic reaction, and glucagon for students who suffer from diabetes. An amendment to this bill allows for residence hall directors at UW-System institutions, technical colleges, and private colleges to administer an opioid antagonist.



Treatment and Diversion Funding and Expansion (Act 32)

- Allocates additional funding for TAD programs to expand TAD to new counties, and for a pre-booking diversion pilot program.

911 Good Samaritan Expansion (Act 33)

- Current law (at the time) offered limited immunity from prosecution for certain drug-related offenses to a person who summons emergency personnel in the event of another person's overdose. This bill expands upon current law to offer the same limited immunity to the person who is overdosing.

Schedule V Medications (Act 25)

- Requires a prescription to obtain certain Schedule V medications, like codeine cough syrups and will help ensure these potentially dangerous medications are less accessible to those looking to misuse/abuse them.

Emergency Detention (Act 34)

- Allows for the same treatment of alcohol addiction as drug addiction: 3 petitioners, Court proceedings, and a 72 hour hold. This bill also fits in tandem with the Good Samaritan expansion – if a person suffers an overdose, he/she may be taken out of active use through emergency detention.

Recovery School (Act 30)

- This recovery school is an alternative to a student's residential school and offers high school aged students who have struggled with addiction an opportunity at long-term recovery while continuing their high school education. The school will offer mental health and therapy supports to encourage students to continue on the path to recovery. This bill is based on proven national recovery school models, utilizes a braided funding structure, and is capped at 15 students during the pilot phase to ensure every student gets the support they need to succeed.

Graduate Medical Education (Act 26)

- Currently (at the time) graduate training and fellowships are not widely available in addiction medicine, yet due to rapid growing opioid epidemic, addiction medicine specialists are in high demand. This bill allocates funding for additional addiction medication fellowships in Wisconsin to better assist with the increasing case workload.

Hope Centers (Act 27)

- Previous law created 3 regional treatment facilities in rural and underserved areas including: North Lakes Community Clinic (serving northwest WI), Northeast Wisconsin Opioid Treatment Services (Marinette area/Libertas), and HOPE Consortium (between northeast and northwest facilities). This bill allocates funding to establish more regional treatment facilities in underserved areas.

Doctor-to-Doctor Consultation (Act 28)

- Provides a Doctor-to-Doctor Consultation program modeled after the Child Psychiatry Consultation Program (CPCP) at the Medical College of Wisconsin. This program will act as a resource for doctors who aren't well versed in addiction medicine to be in consultation with other doctors who can suggest addiction treatment best practices.



DOJ Agents (Act 35)

- Allocates funding for 4 new DOJ positions to fight drug trafficking.

SBIRT—Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (Act 31)

- Allocates funding for a program called Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT), where students will have access to trained counselors should they have any concerns about substance use, abuse, and addiction.

Legislation

Law Enforcement and Justice HOPE Agenda Initiative (Act 261)

- Medically Assisted Treatment Pilot Program.
- Law-enforcement drug trafficking grants.
- Regional Drug Prosecutors.
- Evidenced Based Programming Funding.
- Victim Impact Panels.
- Family and Juvenile Drug Court Expansion.

Healthcare and Workforce HOPE Agenda Initiative (Act 262)

- Expanding access to Substance Abuse Counselors and reducing barriers to treatment.
- County Training Tools.
- Psychiatric Mental Health Nurses Education Grants.
- Prescriber Continuing Education.
- Prior-Authorization of Buprenorphine.
- Public School Health Curriculum.

Other Initiatives:

2018 Executive Orders Signed by Governor Walker relating to the HOPE Agenda:

- 1) Creation of advisory council to analyze if state should pursue a hub-and-spoke delivery model for treatment and care.
- 2) Convene Governor’s Faith-based summit on opioids for pastors, priests, parish nurses, and others involved in faith-based community organizations confronting the prevention, intervention, recovery, and criminal justice consequences of this crisis.
- 3) Work with the Law Enforcement Standards Board to develop and deploy training and best practices around law enforcement and medical first responder encounters with fentanyl and opioid-intoxication incidents.
- 4) Apply for a federal grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance to develop a technology application that tracks treatment capacity for substance abuse services.
- 5) Work with stakeholders to develop uniform statewide standards for data submission on people seeking substance abuse treatment.
- 6) No longer require prior authorization for buprenorphine treatment combination drugs for BadgerCare enrollees other than pregnant women.
- 7) Work with the Department of Corrections to better facilitate continuity of care for offenders reentering society at the conclusion of their prison terms by developing offender-only service units with contracted managed care organizations within BadgerCare.



Children and Family Services

Children and Family Services, Supporting our Families

Budget

Fighting Domestic Abuse and Child Abuse and Neglect

- Increases funding to combat child sex trafficking and provide services for victims in Wisconsin. (\$2M)
 - There is a strong link between runaway children and child sex trafficking. We provided an additional funds for child runaway services. (\$200,000)
- Provides additional resources for low-income victims of domestic abuse, sexual abuse, and other violent acts to have access to adequate civil legal services. (\$1M)
- Funds civil legal services for victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse. (\$500,000)
- Expands child welfare prevention services beyond Milwaukee County (law previously restricted the program to Milwaukee County.) (\$7.8M)
- Increases funding for children and family aids, which assists counties with costs related to child abuse and neglect. (\$7.1M)

Eliminating Waiting Lists for Needed Services

- Eliminates the waiting list for Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) services program, providing approximately 2,200 children with the care and services they need.

Fully fund Medicaid

- Helps provide medical care for poor and elderly populations.

Mitigating the Wisconsin Shares Benefit Drop off

- Ensures there isn't a disincentive for low income families to accept a promotion at the risk of losing access to quality child care.

Increase in Foster Care and Kinship Care Rates

- Increase payments for the foster and kinship care programs, which provide safe homes for vulnerable youth, by 2.5% annually. (\$3M)

Case Management Services to the Homeless

- Allocates funds to help shelter facilities provide intensive case management services to homeless families. (\$1M)

Legislation

A Focus on Foster Care

- The Speaker's Task Force on Foster care led to the passage of 13 bills, 11 of which were signed into law. This package makes improvements to the child welfare system, provide additional resources for foster children, and investments to support families in order to help prevent contact with the child welfare system in the first place.
- *Increase payments for the foster and kinship care programs, which provide safe homes for vulnerable youth, by 2.5% annually. (\$3M in budget, also listed in previous section)*



Helping the Homeless

- Passage of a package of four bills focused on funding and coordination of services and housing for the homeless. (Assembly Bills 234, 235, 236, and 237, two of which were taken up in the budget and two passed as separate bills)
- *Allocates funds to help shelter facilities provide intensive case management services to homeless families. (\$1M in budget, also listed in previous section)*

Resources for Suicide HOPELINE

- Provides funding for HOPELINE which provides immediate emotional support and resources for individuals experiencing a crisis and is available 24/7 (AB 938*)

Investing in Early Child Care—Increase Child Care Reimbursement Rates

- Increases the state's investment in the Wisconsin Shares program by raising the reimbursement rate paid to providers and rewarding high quality centers with a larger Youngstar rating bonuses. This is critical to our workforce needs, as lack of available high quality child care can be a determining factor for many families seeking employment opportunities. (2017 Act 236)

Giving the Surplus back to Taxpayers—Creation of a \$100 per child tax rebate and sales tax holiday

- Due to our responsible fiscal decisions and strong economy, we have a budget surplus that we can give back to Wisconsinites in the form of a child tax rebate and sales tax holiday. (Act 367)

Asterisk () indicates legislation passed by the Assembly but not the Senate*



Budget

Developing our Healthcare Workforce

- **Increases pay for personal care service workers**
 - Increases the MA reimbursement rate for personal care services by 2% in each year of the biennium.
 - This increased rate will be paid to personal care agencies to fund all costs associated with providing care, including wages and benefits for workers.
- **Increases pay for Family Care workers**
 - Family Care is a long-term care program which helps frail elders and adults with disabilities get the services they need to remain in their homes. This comprehensive and flexible program offers services to foster independence and quality of life for members, while recognizing the need for interdependence and support.
- **Increases funding for grants to establish graduate medical education (GME) training programs on an ongoing basis**
 - This funding will help doctors across the state specialize in highly needed fields to help populations that may not have access to certain medical specialties.
- **Primary Care and Psychiatry Grant Program**
 - Modifies the Primary Care and Psychiatry Grant program to expand the eligibility requirements for the program so that it can properly provide grants to primary care physicians and psychiatrists in underserved areas as intended when the program was created in 2013.
- **Training for APCs and Allied Health Professionals**
 - Grants to hospitals and clinics that provide new training opportunities for advanced practice clinicians, and grants to hospitals, health systems, and educational entities that form health care education and training consortia for allied health professionals.

Making Important Healthcare Investments

- **Prevention of Communicable Diseases:** Funds local public health departments for the control and prevention of communicable diseases throughout Wisconsin.
- **DSH Grants:** Increased funding for disproportionate share hospitals (DSH) and critical access care facilities. These hospitals serve a disproportionately high level of Medicaid patients and therefore receive lower reimbursement rates for those patients.
- **Expands the UW Carbone Cancer Center** to bring access to precision medicine to more cancer patients statewide (\$980,000)



Legislation

Lowering the Cost of Healthcare

- **Wisconsin Healthcare Stability Plan (Act 138)**
 - Establishes a reinsurance plan which would cover high cost claims which will help stabilize the state's private health insurance market, reduce premiums in the individual market, and increase coverage.
- **Care Coordination Pilot Program (Act 279)**
 - Creates a care coordination pilot program to help save costs and improve emergency department utilization by creating efficiencies, smarter care, and saving costs.
- **Association Health Plans (AB 920*)**
 - Allows two or more small businesses who are part of the same chamber of commerce or trade association to band together to self-fund health benefits for their employees and dependents. This offers businesses flexibility and cost-savings.

Coverage of Pre-Existing Conditions (AB 365*)

- Prohibits health insurance policies and plans from considering preexisting conditions for those with continuous coverage when setting premiums, deductibles, and copayments under a plan.

Increasing Access to Quality Healthcare

- **Direct Primary Care (AB 798*)**
 - Creates the framework for which a provider agrees to offer an unlimited amount of specified routine health care services for a monthly fee. This is a promising solution towards tangibly improving patient access to healthcare, achieving better patient outcomes, and realizing cost savings.
 - While this legislation did not pass the Senate, we're continuing movement on the issue by forming a Study Committee on Direct Primary Care.
- **Community Emergency Medical Services (Act 66)**
 - Creates a process for the development of a Community Emergency Medical Services program. Programs like these can help provide opportunities for non-emergency health services by community paramedics and EMTs to provide treatment and assistance outside of a hospital. This could help reduce hospital readmissions, help target at-risk populations, and provide more access for rural areas.
- **Creation of Expanded Function Dental Auxiliaries (AB 749*)**
 - Creates a new provider level within the dentistry industry called Expanded Function Dental Auxiliaries (EFDAs) which are licensed members of the dental team, and can allow dental offices to be more efficient and to see more patients.

Removing Unnecessary Red Tape and Increasing Efficiencies

- **Nurse Licensure Compact** Maintains Wisconsin's status as a Nurse Licensure Compact state which helps nurses avoid unnecessary red-tape and barriers for nurses interested in serving patients in any of the 26 compact states. (Act 135)

Asterisk () indicates legislation passed by the Assembly but not the Senate*



- Physical Therapy Licensure Compact Ratifies and enters Wisconsin into the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact which allows certified physical therapists in good standing to practice in multiple states. This eliminates unnecessary red tape and will allow clinics to fill vacancies faster. (AB 942*)

Fighting Drug Abuse and Addiction

- **Tracking the Sale of PSE** Requires the implementation of a real-time electronic logging and compliance system that tracks the sale of over-the-counter (OTC) cold and allergy medications containing pseudoephedrine (PSE), precursors to the illegal drug, methamphetamine. (Act 98)
- **Easier Prosecution of Drug Dealers and Manufacturers** by adding all fentanyl analogs, which can be 50 times more potent than heroin, to the list of Schedule I controlled substances. (Act 60)
- **Continuation of the HOPE Agenda** Increases funding for Treatment and Diversion programming and increased staff for operations of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, which tracks the movement of legal scheduled prescription medications (budget)
 - A Special Session in January 2017 was dedicated to the HOPE Agenda and another two HOPE bills passed in 2018. We have passed a total of 30 pieces of legislation that fight against the rampant opioid and drug crisis in our state.

Language Interpretation Grants

- Grants to reimburse medical clinics and hospitals in rural or medically underserved area for language interpretation services provided to patients. (AB 305*)

Continued Support for Alzheimer's and Dementia

- Provides grants to community programs across the state to raise awareness for Alzheimer's and dementia resources. (Act 186)
- *Increases funding for Alzheimer's Disease Research Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and increased the number of dementia care specialists from 19 to 24 in 2018 (budget, also listed in previous section)*

Expanding Potentially Life-Saving Treatment Options

- "Right to Try" Allows terminally ill patients access potentially lifesaving drugs that are in the process of obtaining FDA approval. (Act 165)
- Legalizing the Possession of CBD oil Allows families who have exhausted all options another treatment alternative. This oil has shown promise in treating seizure disorders, especially among young children. (Act 4)
- Breast Density Notification Helps detect breast cancer in women at an earlier stage by requiring those performing mammograms to provide notice to women regarding dense breast tissue. (Act 201)

Asterisk (*) indicates legislation passed by the Assembly but not the Senate



Mental Health

Budget

Mental Health Options for Youth

- Creates two new aid programs related to student mental health
 - School Mental Health Aid to reimburse schools for costs related to providing mental health services to students (\$3M); and,
 - Community and School Mental Health Collaboration Grants to help schools connect with area health providers to meet students' needs. (\$3.25M)
- Funding for Mental Health in Milwaukee Schools
 - Provides funding for targeted mental health services and counseling in five elementary school in Milwaukee (will be administered through DCF.) (\$500,000)
- Child Psychiatry Consultation Program Expansion
 - Provides \$1M over biennium for child psychiatry consultation program.
- Increase Mental Health Resources for Students and Educators
 - Provides for reimbursement for clinical consultations under the MA program mental health practitioners and school personnel concerning students.

Increasing Mental Health Resources in the Corrections System

- Opening Avenues to Reentry Success (OARS) Program Funding
 - Increases funding for the Opening Avenues to Reentry Success (OARS) program so it can expand to Eau Claire, Langlade, Lincoln, Menominee, and Shawano counties.
 - OARS currently provides intensive case management and mental health services to seriously mentally ill offenders in 37 counties.

Legislation

Emergency Youth Mental Health

- Waives the requirement for informed consent for outpatient mental health treatment of minors in emergency situations to allow youth to receive necessary mental health care as quickly as possible. (Act 204)

Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program (VORP)

- Continues the very successful pilot of the VORP program to provide outreach, mental health services, and support to veterans with a mental health condition or substance abuse disorder. Provides \$179,980 in 2017-18 in \$720,000 in 2018-19 to fund the program. (Act 295)



Speaker's Task Force on Foster Care

There were a total of 7,482 children living outside of their homes in 2016 according to the Department of Children and Families Annual Out-of-Home Care Report, which is up 4% from 2015. Out-of-home placements have been on the rise since 2012 and have increased nearly 20% of the past 6 years. These statistics provide evidence that Wisconsin is not immune to the national trend of opioid abuse. This epidemic is driving the dramatic increase of the number of children being removed from their homes.

Children who age-out of the child welfare system often face significant barriers in comparison to their peers living in permanent homes. Studies show that one in five will become homeless after age 18 and only half will be employed by age 24. Few finish high school or go to college; about 60 percent of boys and half of girls are incarcerated at some point in their life. Additionally, for every child that ages out of the foster care system, taxpayers and communities pay an estimated \$300,000 in social costs over that person's lifetime.

The Speaker's Task Force on Foster Care was charged with studying and making recommendations on policy initiatives to improve the child welfare system and provide needed resources to support foster children, parents, and families. Taking a holistic approach, the Task Force addressed ways to assist families and children once they've entered the child welfare system, once they have aged out, and ways to support families to help prevent them from entering into the welfare system in the first place.

Thirteen bipartisan bills were recommended by the task force and taken up by the Assembly, 11 of which were ultimately signed into law.

Budget

- Increases payments for the foster and kinship care programs, which provide safe homes for vulnerable youth, by 2.5% annually (\$3M). These payments will help foster parents provide food, clothing, housing, basic transportation, personal care, and other expenses for children under their care.

Legislation signed into law

Statewide Network for Referrals to Community-Based Services (Act 250)

- United Way 2-1-1 is a 24/7 statewide call-in service where individuals can speak to trained specialists and be referred to appropriate services within their communities- food pantries, homeless shelters, free diaper services, and more. The individuals and families served by 2-1-1 Wisconsin are a population that is often at risk for child abuse and neglect. Wisconsin recently lost federal funding for this program causing it to be in jeopardy.
- Appropriates \$210,000 annually to be distributed as a grant to a nonprofit organization, United Way, for the purpose of operating 2-1-1 Wisconsin. As a condition of the funding, United Way must allocate funding to promote and market the 2-1-1 system to the public.

Streamlining School Procedures Related to Foster Care (Act 251)

- Adds a child's school to the list of entities that must be notified of a permanency plan review or hearing and given opportunity to submit written comments. Teachers and social workers at the school spend much of their time with the child positioning them to provide valuable insight into the child's condition.



- Clarifies that the transfer of pupil records to a child's new school when a child is placed in out-of-home care be made no later than the next working day.
- Changes the requirement that notice of when a child placed in out-of-home care or a foster home is licensed be sent to the school or the school district, as opposed to the school clerk to ensure the information is properly received.

Limited Release of Mental Health Information (Act 252)

- Permits a health care provider to disclose information regarding a child's mental health treatment records to a foster parent or to a child welfare agency if the health care provider reasonably believes it is necessary for the proper care of the child.
- This bill does not give the foster parent permission to obtain the child's entire mental health record.

A Parent's Right to Counsel in CHIPS Proceedings (Act 253)

- Authorizes the State Public Defender (SPD) to create a five county (Brown, Outagamie, Winnebago, Racine, and Kenosha), pilot program to provide legal representation to biological parents whose children are the subject of a Child in Need of Protective Services (CHIPS) petition.
- Court proceedings are complicated. Anyone who shows up for a court, regardless of the circumstances, without an attorney is going to slow the process down. Providing legal representation to biological parents will help facilitate the overall court process and reduce delays if the case proceeds to termination of parental rights. Similar pilot programs in other states showed a decrease in termination of parental rights, an increase in reunification and fewer days from limbo to permanency for the child.

Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Grants (Act 254)

- Appropriates \$500,000 annually in federal funding (TANF) to award grants to counties, nonprofits and tribes for the purpose of promoting practices aimed at preventing families have contact with the child welfare system. Prevention is key and this act gives counties, nonprofits, and tribes the flexibility to invest in existing programs, or start-up new programs that they believe will fit the needs of their communities.

Funding for Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) (Act 255)

- CASAs are citizen volunteers, appointed by judges, who advocate for the best interests of children whom is placed in out-of-home care. They currently operate in 9 programs in 12 counties. Children who are served by a CASA volunteer often have improved outcomes in many aspects of their lives, such as shorter time in foster care, improved academic performance, reduced likelihood of returning to foster care, and fewer placement changes.
- Appropriates an additional \$250,000 annually to stabilize and expand the current Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program.

Eliminating the "Look Ahead" Period for Termination of Parental Rights (Act 256)

- This bill changes the grounds for involuntary termination of parental rights (TPR) based on a continuing CHIPS order, and eliminates the requirement to provide proof that the parent will continue to fail to meet the conditions for the next 9 months in cases where the child has been placed in out-of-home care under a CHIPS proceeding for 15 out of the past 22 months.



- Reunification with the biological family is the main outcome for most out-of-home care placements, but in situations where this isn't the case, TPR proceedings can often become a lengthy, confusing, and uncertain situation for a child in out-of-home care.

Foster Home Licensing (Act 257)

- This proposal makes two technical changes to the licensing of foster homes that was crafted with both the input of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Wisconsin Counties Human Service Association (WCHSA).
 - Creates a process for continuity for licensed foster parents and children placed, or pending placements, when the county or child protection agency no longer will be issuing foster care licenses.
 - Modifies the process by which counties may license foster homes in other counties.
- The two changes in the proposal remove barriers to foster parent licensing in order to improve stability and continuity of foster care placements.

Changes to the Procedure in Termination of Parental Rights (Act 258)

- Makes two changes to appellate procedure in proceedings related to the termination of parental rights which will help avoid unnecessary or unwanted appeals:
 - Requires a notice of intent to include the signature of the appellant (who is usually the biological parent) on whose behalf the notice of intent is filed, unless the appellant is the state.
 - There are times the parents may not even know an appeal has been filed thereby leaving the child in limbo while the court tries to track the parent down.
 - Requires that the appellant or appellant's counsel file an affidavit in support of the motion to appeal stating the facts the appellant anticipates will be established at a fact-finding hearing upon remand.

Clarify the Definition of Dental Care for Out-of-Home Care (Act 259)

- Defines "dental care" for the purpose of providing ordinary medical and dental care for children placed in out-of-home care.
- Provides clarity for health care providers, counties, and most importantly, children, who are placed into the foster care system and have unmet oral health care needs.

Funding for Grants to Support Foster Parents and Foster Children (Act 260)

- Appropriates \$400,000 in 2018-19 for DCF to award grants to counties, nonprofit organizations, and tribes to support foster parents in their efforts to provide normalcy for children in out-of-home care.
- Qualifying uses of the funds may include incentives for the retention of foster parents, enhancing foster parent education, and reimbursing foster parents for foster care related expenses.



Other Task Force Initiatives Passed by the Assembly

Committee to Study Child Welfare Worker Caseloads (AB 783)

- Creates a committee to study child welfare caseloads and make recommendations regarding (1) the maximum number of cases that a caseworker may be reasonably expected to effectively manage; (2) the maximum ratio of supervisors to caseworkers at which a supervisor may be reasonably expected to provide effective guidance and direction; and (3) the amount of funding that would be necessary to implement those standards.
- At a time when the number of children requiring out-of-home care is at its peak, a consistent, stable workforce is critical.

UW and Technical College Tuition Remission for Foster Care Students (AB 777)

- Grants tuition remission to UW or WTCH institutions for qualifying students who had been placed in out-of-home care.
- Provides DCF \$120,000 for grants to support former foster youth in higher education. The department is required to award at least four grants of up to \$30,000 to UW System or WTCS institutions for the purpose of providing resources, programs, and activities for former foster youth.



Entitlement Reform

Wisconsin has long been a leader in welfare reform and getting people back to work. Under Governor Tommy Thompson, Wisconsin led the nation in becoming a model for national welfare reform with the formation of Wisconsin Works (W-2). With the special session on Welfare Reform and other important legislation passed this session, Assembly Republicans helped our state be a leader in comprehensive welfare reform.

We approved legislation that promotes accountability, encourages personal responsibility, prevents fraud and abuse, and gets more Wisconsinites back into the workforce. Public assistance was never intended to be permanent, and our initiatives bring public benefits back in live with their original purpose.

Our state is experiencing a worker shortage and we need everyone who can work to participate in the workforce. Unemployment has reached its lowest point in state history. In addition, the state's employment website has more than 90,000 jobs available.

We know workforce training initiatives work at getting people into the workforce. Since the requirement started in April 2015, more than 25,000 have transitioned into work.

By the numbers

- In 2017, there were **925,047** recipients of food stamps totaling **\$867,249,657** in costs. This is down from **1,097,780** recipients at a cost of **\$1,188,988,277** in 2013. Our reforms have not only bent the cost curve, but also have helped get people back into the workforce.
- **17%** of our 2017-19 GPR budget was for medical assistance, which equates to almost **\$6 billion** over the biennium. It was only **8.4%** in the 2009-11 budget.
- **1,187,187** Wisconsinites are on Medicaid

Budget

Childless Adult Employment and Training Waiver for Medical Assistance

- Directs DHS to request a waiver amendment to impose certain eligibility requirements and restrictions on childless adults participating in BadgerCare Plus and to provide employment and training services to childless adults participating in BadgerCare Plus.

Drug Testing for and Treatment for W2 Programs

- Requires controlled substance screening, testing, and treatment as a condition of eligibility for certain W-2 employment positions. If a person fails a drug test, he or she will be referred to treatment. Alternatively, if an individual refuses a drug test, he or she will relinquish W-2 eligibility.

Freeze Benefits from Inactive FoodShare Accounts after Six Months

- Expunges benefits if they remain unused after a one-year period.
- These benefit amounts should be used by recipients on a monthly basis to supplement nutritional needs, not as a savings account which can serve as an invitation for fraudulent activity.



Learnfare School Attendance Requirement

- Expands the Learnfare school attendance requirement to permit sanctions on the basis of attendance rather than just enrollment. More specifically, it expands the school attendance requirement to include habitual truants, such that a child would fail the attendance requirement by being absent from school without an acceptable excuse for part or all of five or more days during the current or previous semester.

Require child support compliance for receipt of FoodShare benefits

- Restores the child support cooperation requirement in the FoodShare supplemental nutrition assistance program as a condition of eligibility.

Mitigating the Wisconsin Shares Benefit Drop-off

- Increases the threshold to receive childcare benefits through the Wisconsin Shares childcare assistance program by allowing participants to continue receiving assistance after surpassing 200 percent FPL but increasing their copayment by \$1 for every \$3 their income exceeds 200 percent FPL. However, a family becomes ineligible for the childcare subsidy if family income exceeds 85% of state median income for the family size.
- This change ensures there isn't a disincentive for low income families to accept a promotion at the risk of losing access to quality child care.

Special Session Legislation:

2018 January Special Session on Welfare Reform: Promotes Accountability, Encourages Personal Responsibility, Prevents Fraud and Abuse, and gets People back to Work

Increasing Hours of Participation in the FoodShare Employment and Training Program

(FSET) (Act 263)

- Allows DHS to set the required hours of participation in FoodShare employment and training (FSET) program to coincide with the maximum allowed by the federal government for both able-bodied adults with and without dependent children. Currently, Wisconsin law requires 20 hours of work for able-bodied adults without dependents, while the federal government allows up to 30 hours for able-bodied adults with dependents.
- This allows both groups of able-bodied adults to be treated the same under FSET participation requirements.

Statewide FSET Requirements for Able-Bodied Adults (Act 264)

- Requires DHS to require all able-bodied adults, with or without dependents over the age of 6, to participate in FSET as a condition of FoodShare eligibility beginning October 1, 2019.
- Requires a financial and performance evaluation audit of the FSET program in 2019.

Employment Screening and Employability Plans for Residents in Public Housing (Act 265)

- Requires public housing authorities to do the following:
 - Conduct screening to determine if adult is able-bodied and either unemployed or underemployed.
 - Create employability plan for an individual who is determined to be able-bodied and require resident to participate in plan.



- Require able-bodied residents to complete a questionnaire or other screening instrument about the abuse of controlled substances. If there is suspicion of abuse, they must undergo a test and must be offered opportunity for treatment.

Payments Based on Performance for Wisconsin Works and FSET Contractors (Act 266)

- Requires DHS to create and implement a payment system based on performance for FSET vendors, and requires DCF to also use performance-based criteria for payments to W2 agencies.
- These payments first apply to contracts entered into or renewed on effective date of the Act.
- Payments must be based on: placement of participants into unsubsidized employment, whether placement is full time or part time, job retention rate, wages and benefits earned by former participants, appropriate implementation of the program, and customer satisfaction.
- Added AB 501 as an amendment to the bill. AB 501 creates a pilot program that would provide 2000 FoodShare eligible households in both rural and urban Wisconsin with discounts on purchases of fresh produce and other healthy food options at participating retailers. This would be voluntary.

Pay for Success Contracting (Act 267)

- Allows the Department of Administration (DOA) to contract with a private organization to provide social, employment, or correctional services, for which payment on the contract is specifically dependent on the achievement of identified performance measures.

Creating a Pilot and Permanent Program for making Periodic EITC Payments (Act 270)

- Creates a 2-year (2019 and 2020) pilot program under which 100 EITC recipients will receive monthly EITC payments, instead of a single, lump sum payment when the individuals file their tax returns.
- Establishes a second test group of 100 EITC recipients who will continue to receive their EITC refund in full after filing their tax returns. The Department of Revenue will then compare their financial stability to that of the other test group.

Child Support Compliance for Medical Assistance (Act 268)

- Requires child support and paternity compliance as a condition for eligibility of Medicaid.
- Protects children who are dependent on Medicaid. Medicaid dependent children will remain eligible under the proposal even if a parent becomes ineligible.

Creation of a Savings Account Program in Medical Assistance Program (Act 271)

- Requires DHS to submit a waiver to establish and implement a savings account, similar to a Health Savings Account, in the Medical Assistance Program.
- This could be something similar to that of "Healthy Indiana."

Asset Restrictions on Eligibility for FoodShare, Wisconsin Works, and Wisconsin Shares (Act 269)

- **W-2 eligibility changes:** Recipients cannot have more than one home, which cannot be valued at more than 200% of the statewide median value for homes, excluding agricultural land.
 - The Act retains the current standard which limits the equity value of a W-2 work group's vehicles to \$10,000.
- **FoodShare and WI Shares eligibility changes:** Recipients cannot have more than one home, which cannot be valued at more than 200% of the statewide median value for homes, excluding agricultural land. Additionally, recipients cannot have a combined equity value of any vehicles more than \$20,000.



- An amendment to the bill requires DHS and DCF to perform a comparison, at least once every three months, of each department's respective public benefit database information against nationally recognized databases that contain information on death records to identify participants in public benefits programs that are deceased.

Photo ID Cards for FoodShare Recipients (January 2018 Special Session Assembly Bill 10)

- Require DHS to submit a plan to implement photos on QUEST cards, as well as a waiver request to the Department of Agriculture (USDA), allowing DHS to require FoodShare recipients to show a photo QUEST card when making a FoodShare purchase.

Legislation

Increase Unemployment Insurance Fraud Penalties (Act 147)

- Creates criminal penalties for Unemployment Insurance (UI) fraud and allows multiple violations to be prosecuted as a single crime. Aligns UI fraud with the penalties for theft.

Limiting Unhealthy Foods in the FoodShare Program (AB 530*)

- Creates a pilot program that limits purchases of foods that have little or no nutritional value under the FoodShare program. This will help promote healthy eating habits and help use tax-payer funds more responsibly.

Mobility Grants for Unemployment Insurance (AB 243*)

- Allocates \$50,000 to DWD for a study on the feasibility of mobility grants in Wisconsin. Mobility grants would provide those receiving unemployment insurance benefits with financial assistance when relocating to areas with greater employment opportunities.

Housing Voucher Work Requirements (AB 238*)

- Authorizes WHEDA to request federal permission to develop a pilot program that would (1) require able-bodied recipients to satisfy a work requirement but also (2) partner with existing public and private resources to deliver employment, training and self-sufficiency services that will help recipients meet the work requirement.
- *Note: Action by WHEDA on April 19, 2017, authorized development and implementation of this provision using existing statutory authority.*

Asterisk (*) indicates legislation passed by the Assembly but not the Senate



Seniors

Assembly Republicans strive to make Wisconsin a great place to live for all our residents, including our seniors who have spent their years contributing to our economy, our schools, our roads, and the needy. This session we strived to make sure they are able to get the important care they need and kept our promise of keeping taxes low, which is of vital importance to our seniors who are living on a fixed income.

By the numbers

- **21.5%** of Wisconsinites are over the age of 60
- **32%** of Wisconsinites over the age of 65 have a disability
- **29%** of Wisconsinites over the age of 65 are living alone
- **46.9%** of Wisconsinites with the head of the household over the age of 65 have a household income of below \$35,000
- **7.7%** of Wisconsinites above the age of 65 are living in poverty

Budget

Fully Funded SeniorCare and Requested for Permanency of the Program

- In addition to fully funding SeniorCare in the budget, we're asking the federal government for a 10-year renewal of the popular SeniorCare program, a prescription drug program for eligible seniors.

Lessening the Tax Burden and Simplifying our Tax Code

- This session, Republicans in the legislature have continued our commitment to taxpayers by continuing to lessen the tax burden.
 - Keeping property taxes lower than they were in 2010 and 2014
 - Keeping sales and income taxes flat
 - Simplifying the tax code by repealing three different taxes: forestry mill tax (i.e. state property tax), the alternative minimum tax, and the soda water tax.
- **Rainy Day Fund** Additionally, we have continued to put money into what already was our largest rainy day fund in state history. We understand that responsible households live within their means and good, responsible government needs to do the same.
- **IRA Charitable Rollover** Allows for tax-free distribution from an IRA to a qualified charitable organization. This will help foster generosity and could simplify tax filing, as this is already currently permitted for federal income tax purposes. This measure was similar to a bill introduced prior to being taken up in the budget. (AB 176)

Continued Support for Alzheimer's and Dementia

- **Funding for Research:** Increases funding for the Alzheimer's Disease Research Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. (\$100,000)
- **More Dementia Care Specialists:** Increases the number of dementia care specialists from 19 to 24 in 2018. Dementia Care Specialists provide information and assistance about Alzheimer's disease and other dementias through select Aging and Disability Resource Centers.



- **Grants for Awareness:** *Provides \$500,000 in grants to community programs across the state to raise awareness for Alzheimer's and dementia resources. (Act 186)*

Improvements in Public Safety—Upgrade to 911 System

- Provides funding for a much needed upgrade to Wisconsin's 911 system. Specifically, it creates of statewide 911 network that will improve your ability to contact 911 services, including upgrades to allow for text messaging and video conferencing.

Personal Care Rate Increase

- Increases the MA reimbursement rate for personal care services by 2% in each year of the biennium. The new rates would take effect on July 1, 2017.

Legislation

Supported Decision Making Agreements (Act 345)

- Allows for supported decision-making agreements in which the adult would choose a “supporter” to help them gather information that is relevant to a medical, financial or educational decision, but the final decision making authority would remain with the individual. This offers another option for people who need assistance but will not strip people of their right to make their own decisions.

Prescriptions Order Extensions (Act 19)

- Allows pharmacists to extend current prescriptions in the event that the prescribing doctor cannot be reached. Ensures continuity of patient care and enhances patient access and safety, but also puts safeguards in place so that this flexibility is not abused.

Increasing Time with your Doctor—Direct Primary Care (AB 798*)

- Creates the framework for the use of a direct primary care model in the private market in which a provider agrees to offer an unlimited amount of specified routine health care services for a monthly fee and additionally explores this model for Medical Assistance. Direct primary care is a promising solution towards tangibly improving patient access to healthcare, achieving better patient outcomes, and realizing cost savings.

Consumer Protection against Data Breaches (AB 565*)

- Gives consumers more control over their personal data by prohibiting charges for credit freezes. Data hacks becoming more common; it's important that citizens are able to freeze and unfreeze their credit without paying an unfair fee, especially when the security breach was no fault of their own.

CPR Instructions over the Phone (Act 296)

- Requires 911 dispatchers to be able to give CPR directions over the phone if needed in order to ensure anyone who dials 911 in Wisconsin will have assistance in administering this life-saving technique.

Alzheimer's Awareness Grants (Act 186)

- Provides \$500,000 in grants to community programs across the state to raise awareness for Alzheimer's and dementia resources.

Asterisk () indicates legislation passed by the Assembly but not the Senate*



Energy and Utilities

Budget

More Investment in Broadband Infrastructure

- Adds additional \$14 million in state funding for broadband expansion grants to ensure that all corners of the state have adequate internet service.

Intervenor Compensation

- Restores funding for Intervenor Compensation to help provide resources to keep residential utility rates low and affordable.

Stray Voltage Program

- Maintains the stray voltage program in a streamlined manner by reducing the number of staff to more realistically reflect program workload. Preserving the program will provide a cost effective way to minimize disputes between utilities and farmers and keep utility rates low.

Legislation

Renewable Resources Credits (Act 53)

- Updates the renewable energy portfolio standards to include heat as a byproduct as a renewable energy so long as it is captured and reused making facilities more efficient and contributing a cleaner Wisconsin.

One Call System (Act 136)

- This comprehensive legislation makes common sense changes and updates to the following safety protocols in the utility industry: (1) Digger's Hotline requirements; (2) powers and duties of the Public Service Commission (PSC) regarding certain aspects of state energy policy; (3) exemptions from requirements to obtain certain certifications from the PSC for rebuilding electric transmission lines; (4) authority of the PSC with regard to advertising by water utilities; (5) authority of the PSC to accept settlement agreements; (6) construction site erosion control and storm water management zoning ordinances; and (7) funding for the Broadband Expansion Grant Program.

Disaster Relief Sales and Use Tax Exemption (Act 290)

- Provides certain sales and use tax exemptions for utility workers who are working to repair Wisconsin's infrastructure during a disaster relief scenario or state of emergency.

Lead Service Line Replacement (Act 137)

- Landmark legislation that provides the framework for municipalities to remove dangerous lead laterals that make up the water infrastructure of some towns. This will help ensure that Wisconsin citizens across the state have safe drinking water for generations to come.

Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (Act 312)

- Modifies the authority of the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) to disconnect from the MMSD sewerage system a city, town, village, sanitary district, or metropolitan sewerage district that receives service from MMSD through a contract ("contract community"), and it modifies the standards that govern the Public Service Commission's (PSC) review of complaints regarding MMSD's rates, rules, and practices.



Rural Broadband (AB 123 and incorporated into the budget)

- The largest investment and most ambitious legislation, to-date, aimed at providing broadband internet access to rural communities so that we can ensure that all Wisconsin citizens have access to broadband.
- Set criteria governing a school district’s eligibility for Information Technology (I.T.) block grants, under the Technology for Educational Achievement (TEACH) program and defined “unserved area,” as the term is used with regard to the Broadband Expansion Grant Program.

Next Generation “5G” Wireless (AB 348*)

- Cutting-edge legislation that establishes the parameters for the deployment of next-generation “5G” wireless in municipalities and communities across the state. This bill would provide the framework for local governments to partner with wireless providers so that Wisconsin citizens can enjoy the high speed wireless networks of tomorrow.



Real Estate & Property Rights

Assembly Republicans are committed to protecting the American Dream. With the strong economy, home sales had a record year in 2017, which makes this priority even more essential. Many key reforms strengthened property owners' rights and continue to bolster both individual rights and the real estate market in Wisconsin.

Budget

Improved Tax Environment

- Despite the rising real estate market and real estate values, property taxes are once again lower this past year than in 2010.
- An entire portion of the state property tax was eliminated. (Forestry Mill Tax)

"Right to Rent"

- Fair and common sense guidelines that protect a property owner's right to rent their property for short durations. With the rise of online sites that facilitate this type of rental agreement, these fair guidelines will ensure property owners continue to enjoy their full set of rights.

Legislation

Homeowners' Bill of Rights

- **Substandard Lots** (Act 67) Limits the authority of local governments to regulate development on substandard lots and require the merging of lots.
- **Regulatory Reduction** (Act 68) Aimed at reducing the regulatory burden on homeownership and reducing the costs and barriers to buying and owning a home.

Sheriff's Sale Fairness Package

- **Online Foreclosure Auctions** (Act 208) – Provides a process by which any county may enact an ordinance to conduct these auctions online. Online auctions will result in better outcomes for governments, neighborhoods, tenants, and mortgage lenders simply due to increased competition.
- **Sherriff Sale Bidder Eligibility** (Act 339) – Prohibits a buyer from acquiring a new property at a sheriff sale auction if the buyer is already more than 120 days delinquent on property taxes or building code judgments. This will stop nuisance owners with horrible track records from routinely buying property at sheriff's auctions.

Appraisal Management Companies (Act 113)

- Ensures the truth and accuracy of property values by regulating appraisal management companies, ensuring they comply with federal standards.

Reigning in Burdensome Housing Regulation (Act 243)

- Makes housing more affordable by addressing local fees, requiring audits of local government regulations, and incentivizing higher density development.



Affordable Rental Housing Legislation (Act 317)

- Makes it easier for landlords to provide Wisconsinites with quality, clean, safe, and affordable housing. Common sense reforms of this comprehensive omnibus legislation include: sensible historic preservation regulations, appropriate regulations on rental inspections, rental inspection fee structures, and regulation of emotional support animals.

Affordable Housing Tax Credits (Act 176)

- Created a state income and franchise tax credit program for qualified low-income housing developments to help better address housing needs for certain low-income and disadvantaged populations.

Giving Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority Tools to Succeed (Act 277)

- To better equip WHEDA to succeed this legislation makes several changes including: new authorization to hold or sell bonds and notes; new authorization to appeal to JFC for new bonds or notes; new authorization to issue mortgages for refinancing under certain conditions.



Natural Resources & Sporting Heritage

Wisconsinites enjoy a wonderful quality of life and is considered one of the happiest states and a top place to raise a family. We receive those rankings because of our commitment to protecting our natural resources and promoting our sporting heritage. This session, new initiatives ranged from streamlining certain application processes within the DNR and strengthening environmental regulations. In addition, we increased access to our sporting traditions by changing the way hunting licenses are issued to veterans and those with disabilities.

Budget

Increased Funding for County Conservation Staffing

- Allocates \$900,000 so that counties may continue to safely protect natural resources and implement conservation plans.

Preserved DNR Magazine

- Preserves the DNR magazine while reducing the publication to 4 times a year to eliminate unnecessary waste and government spending.

Provided Additional Protections for Our Most Important Natural Resource: Water

- Provides funds to continue the producer-led watershed protection grant program.
- Provides over \$1.6 million in new funding for soil and water resource management grants.
- Adds almost \$1 million in funding for targeted run-off management and urban nonpoint source and municipal flood control programs.

Helped Our Natural Resources and Our Parks Become Self Sustaining to Benefit Future Generations

- Provides additional flexibility for daily park fees and increased the cap on campsites that may be electrified for high demand parks.
- Eliminates Deer and Wild Turkey Carcass Tags.
- Restores funding for ATV safety grants and added funding for Snowmobile Trail Aids.

Legislation

Improved the Brownfield Remediation Program (Act 70)

- Implements changes recommended by the Brownfield Study Group to improve the Brownfield Remediation Program. Some of those improvements include allowing a TIF option for brownfield remediation, expands property assessed in the Clean Energy Loan Program, and creates a DNR pilot program for registration permits.

Provided Increased Local Assistance for Contaminated Wells (Act 69)

- Raises the cap for DNR grants for those with contaminated wells and it authorized local governmental units to remedy contaminated wells with the consent of the current property owner.

Updated the Regulation of Solid Waste Facilities (Act 284 & Act 285)

- Act 284 moves facilities that use pyrolysis and gasification to process post-use plastics into fuel from the solid waste regulation framework to better ensure that these recycling and fuel generating facilities are more properly regulated and allowed to grow to benefit both the environment and the economy.



Wisconsin Conservation Corps (AB 688*)

- Re-establishes the Wisconsin Conservation Corps which would instruct the Dept. of Administration to partner with a non-profit group to administer a program aimed at reaching out to Wisconsin's youth and re-engaging them in projects of environmental conservation.

Mentored Hunting Program (Act 62)

- Promotes greater youth engagement in hunting and the outdoors by eliminating the requirement that a person who hunts under the hunting mentorship program be at least 10 years old and eliminated the restriction prohibiting a mentee and a mentor from possessing more than one weapon between them while hunting.

Apostle Islands Hunting (Act 298)

- Brings back the popular Apostle Islands Muzzleloader Deer Hunting season.

Hunting for Terminally Ill Individuals (Act 182)

- Allows those from out of state with a terminal disease or condition a chance to participate in a hunting activity in Wisconsin by allowing a nonresident or resident who is terminally ill to receive a hunting or fishing approval, at no cost, if the person is participating in a hunting or fishing related event sponsored by a charitable organization.

Turkey Hunting for Vets with Disabilities (Act 14)

- Allows certain veterans with disabilities and recipients of the Purple Heart to be exempt from the cumulative preference process of issuing turkey hunting tags so that this special group of people may hunt together if they desire. This also enables charitable organizations that service veterans with disabilities to better organize outings.

Reduced Fee Fishing and Game Licenses (AB 491*)

- Makes it more affordable for teenagers and those over 65 to hunt and fish by reducing fees for individuals aged 16, 17, or over the age of 65 for certain fishing and game licenses to the same price as the "first time" fishing license price.

Hunting of Woodchucks (Act 64)

- Creates an open season for the hunting and trapping of woodchucks.

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Agriculture

The past two years saw another session aimed at keeping our agriculture industry strong. We helped farmers and families involved in agriculture by reducing regulations, providing resources, and celebrating Wisconsin products. The agricultural industry is essential to the state economy by contributing \$88 billion annually and providing nearly 12 percent of the total jobs in our state.

Budget

Farm to School Program

- Maintains the Farm-to-School Program which connects schools and local farmers to provide locally produced, healthy food for students.

Farmland Preservation Planning Grant Program

- Eliminates the sunset on this important grant program so that counties have the support necessary to preserve farmland and manage agricultural development.

Agrichemical Management Fund and Agricultural Chemical Cleanup Fund

- Restructures these two important programs based on recommendations made by the Agriculture and Chemical Revenue and Expenditures advisory committees. These changes modernize the fee and license structure for pesticides, fertilizers, soil or plant additives, and inspections while ensuring funding to protect our environment and reducing the bureaucratic burden on the agriculture community.

Stray Voltage Program

- Maintains a streamlined version of the stray voltage program to assist in the investigation of the causes of stray voltage and livestock deaths on individual farms.

County Fairs

- Maintains funding for aids to county and district fairs so these integral celebrations of Wisconsin's agricultural community can continue on into the future.

Legislation

Fairer Agricultural & High Capacity Well Regulations (Act 10)

- Addresses the key issues of repair, reconstruction or replacement of an existing high capacity well under DNR approved parameters. This bill provides regulatory certainty for farmers who need to repair or replace an existing well, or want to purchase or sell land with a high capacity well. This certainty allows farm owners to have confidence that when they invest in their agricultural operation they will be able to repair it, when needed, and keep it operating efficiently well into the future.

Livestock Premises Registration (Act 210)

- Increases funding for the Livestock Premises Registration program by 40% annually to ensure that DATCP can more efficiently administer this program helping farmers register certain livestock.



Agriculture Producer Security Program (Act 155)

- Updates and modernizes the Agricultural Producer Security Act to reflect current and preferred business practices in the agriculture community. This act provides much needed flexibility to local communities, organizations, the milk industry, grain dealers and suppliers while strengthening DATCP’s legal position in reimbursement and bankruptcy proceedings.

Cheese Made Official State Dairy Product (Act 8)

- Wisconsin ranks number four in the world for cheese production and has over 100 cheesemakers making 3 billion pounds of cheese in 600 different varieties.

Ginseng Made Official State Herb (Act 86)

- Wisconsin is the number one producer of ginseng in the United States.

Industrial Hemp Program (Act 100)

- Creates a state “industrial hemp” program to be administered by DATCP with input and oversight by DOJ. This program allows and aids Wisconsin farmers in the production of industrial hemp—a non-psycho-active product—by helping them with federal guidelines and developing a registration and seed certification program. Wisconsin was once one of the leading producers of industrial hemp in the United States and this legislation could help add a significant economic driver back to Wisconsin’s agricultural economy.

