

For Immediate Release
February 3, 2015
Contact: Rep. Steve Doyle (608) 792-5594
(608) 266-0631

REP DOYLE'S STATEMENT ON GOVERNOR'S BUDGET PROPOSAL

MADISON – Representative Steve Doyle (D – Onalaska) expressed concern following the Governor's 2015-2017 Budget Address Tuesday evening. The new proposal includes increased bonding, cuts to higher education, and promises to lower property taxes. Rep. Doyle highlighted some of more problematic issues in the budget proposal but also noted that this is a time for cooperation due to the Republican opposition to parts of the Governor's plan.

“One of the more troubling aspects of this proposal is the plan to rely on \$1.3 billion in bonding to fund transportation projects for the next two years,” said Doyle. “We need a long-term solution to the \$680 million shortfall we are facing in transportation, but instead we have a proposal that essentially forces us to fix the problem down the road, no pun intended.”

In addition to the transportation bonding, the Governor's budget proposal also included a \$300 million cut to the UW System, a tuition freeze for the UW schools and certain technical colleges, and drug-testing for adults on welfare.

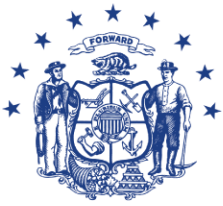
Doyle was also disappointed to see that the Governor's proposal includes lifting the cap on voucher schools across the state. Currently the statewide program has a cap of 1,000 students.

“For every dollar of property taxpayer money that is put into the voucher program, a dollar is taken out of our public schools,” said Doyle. “We cannot afford to fund two separate systems, but that is exactly what this proposal forces us to do.”

Despite this, Doyle noted that the controversial nature of some aspects of the budget present a unique opening for bipartisan cooperation.

“We have an opportunity right now to reach across the aisle and work with our legislative colleagues to come up with better solutions to the problems facing our state,” said Doyle. “We've heard from the Republican legislative leadership that they aren't happy about pushing off our transportation funding problems to future legislatures through bonding. They are worried about the impacts of the UW system changes on their local schools. That is something we can agree on and can use as a starting point for a dialogue.”

“The Governor's proposal has traditionally been a starting point for the Legislature as they work to create their own proposal,” said Doyle. “There are a lot of things that may change between now and when a budget passes the Assembly and Senate and I am hopeful that these changes will be for the better.”



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
STEVE DOYLE

WISCONSIN STATE ASSEMBLY

94th DISTRICT

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