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# HOWARD MARKLEIN

STATE SENATOR • 17<sup>TH</sup> SENATE DISTRICT

## Capitol Update By Senator Howard Marklein June 1, 2022

### **Joint Committee on Finance Approves Funds for Health Insurance, Law Enforcement, Emergency Response and School Safety**

Even though the legislature is out-of-session, we are still working for you in the State Capitol. On Tuesday, May 31, 2022, the legislature's Joint Committee on Finance (JFC), which I co-chair, met to approve funding for health insurance, law enforcement, emergency response, school safety and more.

All of the funding we approved was in the form of a 13.10 request by a state agency. In state statute, we have a mechanism by which the legislature sets aside funding in a bill so that the related state agency has time to put together a plan to administer the requirements of the bill before they can access the funds. The agency then returns to the JFC to lay-out the plan and request the money.

This process creates very good dialogue between state agencies and the legislature. The agencies work with the legislature to ensure that they are meeting legislative intent with their plans in order to receive the funding to take action.

Again, the JFC approved funding for health insurance, law enforcement, emergency response, school safety and more. Most of these funding requests were from legislative action taken earlier this session and in previous legislative sessions.

We added \$5 million to the Wisconsin Healthcare Stability Plan (WIHSP) which was created in 2018 to allow operation of a state-based reinsurance plan to stabilize the Affordable Care Act (ACA) marketplace. Through this program, the state covers a portion of health insurance claims between \$48,000 and \$175,000 for those who are insured through the marketplace. The intent is to stabilize the healthcare marketplace in Wisconsin by relieving some of the burden on insurers. This program has been very successful in managing high risk enrollees and creating a broader pool of people to absorb all other risk. It has also brought insurers back into the state, increased the number of plans available to consumers and lowered the costs.

We also approved \$1 million for the Department of Justice (DOJ) to award grants for community-oriented policing (COP) houses and \$2 million for a police body cam grant program. The COP houses are a successful model in which police departments are given grants to buy and renovate houses in troubled neighborhoods in order to build relationships and to provide a stabilizing presence. Body cams are becoming an essential tool for law enforcement and the people they serve. Both of these grant programs were created by legislation in the last session.

The Department of Military Affairs (DMA) had several requests for funding to administer a number of programs, including several that I led. We provided \$2.2 million for the department's state disaster assistance program. We approved their request for \$1.5 million to provide geographic information system

(GIS) mapping grants for rural counties to participate in Next Generation 911 (NG911). We approved \$500,000 to revive the department's urban search and rescue task force.

Finally, we approved \$2 million for critical incident mapping for schools in order to continue the very effective School Safety Grant program that began during the Walker administration in 2018. These funds will be available for law enforcement to work with local schools to continue digitally mapping their buildings. This data is essential as we work to protect our school children, teachers and communities into the future.

Again, the JFC continues to meet and work with state agencies to advance programs that began in legislative action over the last two years. I will share updates as we meet and approve additional funds for your priorities.