



September 19, 2017

A Budget That Ignores Our Wisconsin Values

Democrats Work to Counter Republicans' Budget with Solutions to Move Wisconsin Families Forward

As an elected representative tasked with fighting for the priorities of my constituents, I view the state budget as a values statement that should represent and advance the shared Wisconsin ideals of fairness, opportunity, and community. But after reviewing and voting on Governor Walker's fourth state budget last week, I could not support the values and priorities being pushed by the governor and legislative Republicans. My inability to support such a misguided two-year spending plan was only compounded by the fact that Republicans refused to even debate a single Democratic amendment to the budget bill on the floor of the Assembly last week.

The 2017-19 state budget continues a pattern of stacking the deck against Wisconsin's working families, continues to max out the state credit card for transportation projects, continues the misguided approach of raising taxes and fees on working families while giving six-figure earners massive tax breaks, and continues to attack and undermine local decision-making. After almost seven years of unilateral control of state government, majority Republicans have been unable to solve some of the biggest problems facing our state and continue to undermine some of our most treasured public institutions. They continue to raise out-of-pocket expenses on things like access to our state parks, and continue to deregulate oversight protections aimed at preserving our public spaces and lands. In this budget, they continue to attack and drive down the wages of Wisconsin workers while casually handing out multi-million dollar pet projects to special interest groups and political donors.

My Democratic colleagues and I opened the budget debate by bringing forward packaged amendments aimed at empowering workers, building strong communities, and giving every Wisconsin citizen a fair shot at achieving their dreams without being saddled by things like student loan debt. It is our belief that these changes to the state budget would have substantially improved the spending plan and would allow working Wisconsin citizens to score a win for themselves and their family.

At a time of national economic growth, Wisconsin should have the opportunity to make big, bold investments in things like a long-term transportation funding solution or income tax breaks for working families; yet we find ourselves just scraping by, barely making ends meet due to the misguided and rigged agenda of Republicans. Wisconsin deserves better and I look forward to the day when Democrats will pass a state budget that scores a win for working Wisconsin families in every corner of our great state.

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