

Governor Evers' Dream Budget Dead on Arrival

By: Senator Cory Tomczyk

This past week, I attended Governor Evers' budget address to the Legislature in the Assembly Chambers. The media lined the outside of the room with big cameras and microphones. Cabinet Secretaries and members of the public packed the galleries above. The Legislature and the other branches of state government packed the Assembly floor to hear how Governor Evers wants to spend \$119 BILLION of your hard-earned tax dollars. It was a lot of pomp and circumstance just to brag about growing government and spending more money. There was even a marching band to cap off the night! As you can tell, the pageantry does not excite me and I do not support Governor Evers' liberal budget. Clearly, the Governor has gone off the deep end and is not serious. If he truly wanted to work with the Republican majority to craft a good budget, this would not be his starting point.

A common misconception I have heard while talking with constituents is that the Governor writes the budget. The Governor does write A budget. However, it is only a proposal. The Governor writes a budget based on requests from each state agency and things he feels are important. After that, the Legislature actually crafts a budget bill that will get sent back to the Governor's desk, just like any other bill that goes through the legislative process. The Legislature has the ability to make changes to the Governor's proposed budget and present him with the updated version, or simply write our own. This process doesn't take place only because we are in divided government. Even when the Governor was a Republican, the Joint Committee on Finance and the Legislature as a whole made many changes. Since Governor Evers has been in office, we have chosen to throw out his budgets and write our own. This is simply because his budget is too far gone to work off of – it is better to start from the last biennial budget. After the budget bill is passed by both houses, then the Governor is able to either sign it into law as-is, veto it in its entirety, or use his line-item veto powers to make changes, then sign it into law. He has chosen the latter for his last two budgets.

It is always entertaining to see how many ideas or initiatives he steals and takes credit from Republicans. It is all smoke and mirrors. He proudly presented “no tax on tips” like he discovered fire. I think we all know where that idea came from – and it wasn't from the East wing of our Capitol. The middle-class tax cut is another idea that, if we remember last session, he vetoed multiple times. If he really was interested in reducing the tax burden, he would have found a way to support the bills that were placed on his desk, especially after we used his own definition of “middle class.” He also took credit for the Agricultural Roads Improvement Program (ARIP), which was created by and passed by the Republican Legislature.

Governor Evers is not serious and not sincere about making life better for Wisconsinites. It's all a political game for him.

The Governor wants to increase the budget by nearly 20% for a grand total of \$119 billion. While my colleagues are worried about becoming Minnesota, I'm afraid we are going to be worse than Minnesota. Our budget will DOUBLE Minnesota's AND Illinois'. This is unbelievable and unsustainable.

Governor Evers talks a lot about climate change and likes to play the scary environmental card claiming Republicans hate the environment. Republicans in the Legislature approved \$125 million

last session to combat PFAS and he vetoed the legislation over one small disagreement about protecting innocent land owners from being on the hook for PFAS that they did not spread. We need to protect those innocent landowners from Attorney General Josh Kaul suing property owners in Wisconsin who had nothing to do with contaminating the land they now live on.

Governor Evers can't be bothered with protecting the residents of Wisconsin from their own government.

These days, Wisconsinites are feeling the effects of inflation and having a hard time putting food on the table for their families. Budgets at home are being tightened and taxpayers across the state are doing everything they can to stretch their paychecks. Shouldn't state government do the same? Instead of growing government and increasing spending, shouldn't we be working as hard as we can to make government more efficient and reduce the tax burden? This is what I believe must happen, and what I'll work towards. The spending spree has to stop. I will be working with my colleagues over the next five months to craft a budget that is responsible and puts the people of Wisconsin and my constituents in the 29th District first. That is what they expect and that is what we will deliver.

If you have any questions about the budget process or anything going on here in the State Capitol, please don't hesitate to call my office and talk with me or my staff. My office number is 608-266-2502.

Wisconsin deserves better. Wisconsin needs a new Governor!

-Sen. Cory Tomczyk

Senator Cory Tomczyk was elected to the State Senate in 2022. The 29th Senate District is comprised of parts of Marathon, Wood, Shawano, Portage, and Waupaca Counties.