

Republican Budget Full of Missed Opportunities

Written by Wisconsin Assembly, Aaron Collins
Wednesday, 26 June 2019 09:37 -

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Budgetary decisions should directly reflect the people's priorities, says Assembly Democratic Leader. Republicans have put their focus on cheap, political victories instead.

MADISON, WI - On Tuesday, Republicans took up their version of the state budget which misses out on many of the opportunities addressed in Governor Evers' plan.

Assembly Democratic Leader Gordon Hintz (D-Oshkosh) released the following statement:



"Governor Evers introduced a budget that made the needed investments in health care, education, transportation, and our natural resources. The Governor's budget was pragmatic but aggressive in how it addressed our state's most pressing issues. It was fiscally responsible and leveraged every opportunity to maximize our taxpayer dollars," Rep. Hintz stated. "What Assembly Republicans took up today falls far short of Governor Evers' budget. They turned 'The People's Budget' into a budget full of missed opportunities. While it was encouraging to see that republicans negotiated this budget on Governor Evers' terms, time and time again they utilized the least efficient methods for investing our tax dollars."

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Just a few of the missed opportunities in the Republican budget:

- DHS: The Republican budget would spend approximately \$300 million MORE in state taxpayer dollars and draws down \$1.3 billion LESS than the Governor's budget.
- DPI: The Republican budget fails to make the needed investments in special education by providing \$509 million less than the Governor. This forces school districts to continue funding special education out of their general fund, therefore reducing their overall budget. Republicans, despite stating support for it, do not reach two-thirds funding for our public K-12 schools.
- UW System: Republicans failed, once again, to prioritize UW System by spending \$69.3 million less than the Governor's proposal, providing only \$13 million.
- DNR: Republicans provided less funding for research than the Governor and failed to expand the well compensation program.
- DOT: Wisconsin's roads rank some of the worst in the country. That's why the Governor proposed a smart, sustainable plan that did not require fee increases or state GPR. Republicans chose to significantly increase fees on Wisconsin drivers (\$95 increase in title fee alone) while giving drivers from Illinois and Minnesota a free ride.

"When you craft a budget based on the needs of the people, it's pretty straight forward – the budgetary decisions directly reflect the people's priorities," said Hintz. "Republicans, on the other hand, put their focus on cheap, political victories instead of the people of our state. Because of that, we see lower levels of investment and fiscally irresponsible decisions. What could have been a budget with broad bipartisan consensus, turned into a budget of missed opportunities."