

Assembly approves Foxconn bill 59-30

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The Assembly this evening green-lighted the \$3 billion Foxconn incentive package, after rejecting a series of Dem amendments over more than six hours of debate.

The 59-30 vote sends the bill to the Senate, which has already referred it to the Joint Finance Committee for another public hearing.

Three Dems who represent southeastern Wisconsin, where the plant is expected to be located, supported the bill while GOP Reps. Adam Jarchow, of Balsam Lake, and Todd Novak, of Dodgeville, opposed it.

The three Dems, Peter Barca and Tod Ohnstad, both of Kenosha, and Cory Mason, of Racine, had spoken with Republicans about possible changes to the bill ahead of Monday's Assembly committee vote, where members passed a substitute amendment to the bill.

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That version, which was before the Assembly today, would add \$20 million for a worker training program and require that the final contract with Foxconn encourage the Taiwanese company to hire Wisconsin workers "when practically possible."

While Ohnstad and Mason, who is running for Racine mayor, both said they wished more Dem amendments had been adopted, they concluded the promise of 13,000 jobs was too good to pass up.

"Five years ago today, I took a vow to work for job creation," said Ohnstad, who opposed the bill in committee. "I meant it then and I mean it now, and I will vote yes for jobs tonight."

Barca, aside from offering a motion to send the bill to JFC earlier in the afternoon, did not speak on the floor before the vote.

Still, other members of the Dem caucus this afternoon dug in their heels against the bill, repeating previously voiced concerns that the bill lacked adequate protections for the environment, needed stronger language on guaranteeing Wisconsin workers would be hired and that the legislation was nothing more than a “corporate welfare” package.

The bill has to clear the Senate before it can go to the gov’s desk with a Sept. 30 deadline in the MOU to have it completed. JFC Co-chair John Nygren said today the committee was still trying to nail down a time and place for a Foxconn public hearing.