

Gov. Walker: Travels Wisconsin fighting for tax cuts, more education funding

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In case you missed it, Governor Walker spent Thursday traveling across the state discussing his state budget proposal, which includes tax cuts, increased funding for education, a historic cut in University of Wisconsin tuition, and other priorities for Wisconsin's working families that build on the successes over the last 6 years.

You can read the Appleton Post-Crescent's coverage of his Fox Valley stop [HERE](#), or below:

Walker talks budget at Fox Valley Tech stop

GREENVILLE – Despite concerns from some legislators, Gov. Scott Walker said his proposed budget will cover the state's transportation priorities without the need to raise taxes or implement a gas tax increase.

"There's no need (for a gas tax increase) at a time when we've had such a positive budget outlook because of reform dividends. There's no need to be raising taxes on anyone affected," Walker said Thursday at a stop at Fox Valley Technical College's Public Safety Training Center, one day after releasing his two-year, \$76.1 billion budget bill. "If anything, we should be finding new ways to lower the overall tax burden of the people of this state."

Walker was in town to take a tour of the FVTC facility, which opened last year to help law enforcement and firefighters train. He also was there to tout his budget proposal, which he introduced Wednesday night to lawmakers in Madison.

Walker stood behind a sign that said “reform dividend” to highlight that money saved from previous provisions can now be used like dividends to cover investments in the 2017-2019 budget, like a \$500 million increase to K-12 public schools if schools can verify they are in compliance with Act 10 reforms.

“We hope to continue to not just have a reform dividend now, but we hope that reform dividend continues to grow into the future,” Walker told reporters.

Other Republicans like Speaker Robin Vos and Assembly Majority Leader Jim Steineke (R-Kaukauna) have asked Walker to consider increasing the gas tax, to prevent the costs of construction projects from increasing as they’re pushed back farther and farther on the schedule.

Rep. Dave Murphy (R-Greenville) and Rep. Mike Rohrkaste (R-Neenah) attended Walker’s stop in Greenville and said it’s too soon to say whether his proposed budget would cover transportation priorities, or if a gas tax increase would be needed.

The two said they planned to look more into the budget, an audit released by the Department of Transportation last month, and see what’s needed, if anything, before committing to an idea.

Ethan Jacquart, an organizer with Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group (WISPIRG), said Walker’s budget takes “important steps” to fix the state’s roads. Jacquart said his group is happy to see Walker invest more in local roads, and scale back spending on large projects in the state’s biggest city.

“Those mega projects (in Milwaukee) are probably the most costly projects and Milwaukee doesn’t need more highways, it needs to fix their existing roads,” Jacquart said.

On Thursday, Walker specifically noted the benefit in his budget for communities outside Milwaukee. His proposed budget doesn’t include funding for construction on the Interstate 94 highway between the Marquette and Zoo interchanges in the Milwaukee area.

“Counties and local governments are seeing more money for local roads and bridge aids than they’ve seen anywhere from 15 to 20 years,” Walker said. “The difference is that we’re not pouring new dollars into big projects in Milwaukee ... We’re redistributing that around the rest of the state.”

Increased funding for higher education proposed

Walker has also called for continuing a tuition freeze in 2017 at University of Wisconsin System schools, and cutting tuition by 5 percent in 2018 for all resident undergraduate students. Technical colleges would also have resident tuition frozen. In turn, the proposed budget would add \$100 million in funding to the UW System and \$10 million for the state’s technical college system...

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