

Kapenga: Three GOP holdouts now a yes after striking deal with gov

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Sen. Chris Kapenga said he and two fellow GOP holdouts on the budget are now a yes after striking a deal with Gov. Scott Walker on vetoes that he said made the spending plan more acceptable.

Kapenga, R-Delafield; Sen. Steve Nass, R-Whitewater; and Sen. Duey Stroebel, R-Saukville, issued a list of demands earlier this week to win their support for the budget.

But amending the budget would have meant sending it back to the Assembly, where Speaker Robin Vos, R-Rochester, has vowed the chamber would not return for another vote.

Kapenga said the discussion of vetoes began with the list of demands the three lawmakers released and then moved to other areas.

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He declined to provide details, saying they would be released after the budget passes the Senate.

Their support means Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald, R-Juneau, is at 19 votes for the budget with Sen. Dave Craig, R-Big Bend, expected to vote no.

“It got us close enough to where we want to get this done,” said Kapenga, who added the three Republicans spoke with Walker over the phone with the gov in South Korea on a trade mission.

A Stroebel spokesman confirmed the Saukville Republican is also a yes now after the deal was locked in, while Nass confirmed he also will vote for the budget

because of the deal.