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Rep. Born: Statement on passage of 2017-19 state budget

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Madison – Representative Mark Born (R-Beaver Dam) issued the following statement upon the passage of the 2017-19 biennial budget in the State Assembly late Wednesday evening:

“Today, Assembly Republicans reaffirmed our commitment to passing a balanced budget while investing in our priorities, such as K-12 education, bringing accountability and additional resources to the University of Wisconsin System, protecting our most vulnerable citizens, and reducing the tax burden on state residents.

“Public education has always been one of my top priorities and I am proud to have been able to vote for a budget that includes the largest ever investment in our K-12 system, which included an additional $639 million in state aid over the next two years.

“In addition, this is a great budget for the UW-System and its students. At the end of this budget, tuition will have been frozen for in-state undergraduates for six straight years, saving students thousands. We also included reforms to increase accountability at the UW while tying part of their funding to performance measures to ensure taxpayer dollars are being spent wisely. Lastly, we made critical investments in maintenance and repair projects at the UW System and other state-owned buildings.

“This budget also contains important funding to help protect our most vulnerable citizens. This includes investments to increase the personal care rate by 2% each

year, funding for dementia care specialists, and increased payments for hospitals that serve higher percentages of Medicaid recipients. This budget additionally provides $490,000 annually to UW Carbone Center to improve research and treatment for cancer patients across the state.

“We served as good stewards of taxpayer dollars throughout the budget process. The non-partisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau estimates we will end this budget with nearly $200 million extra in the bank. The budget also adds reforms to our public benefit programs, including more money for fraud prevention and additional investments into worker training programs that help get people back into the workforce. Moreover, when all is said and done, the budget we passed tonight contains 432 fewer positions and $500 million less in spending than what the Executive Budget originally proposed.

“I was proud to serve on the Joint Finance Committee and help craft a fiscally sound budget that invests in our priorities and helps citizens throughout the 39th Assembly District and across the state.”