

Rep: Felzkowski: State assembly passes strong biennial state budget

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Madison- State Representative Mary (Czaja) Felzkowski released a statement Wednesday evening following passage of the 2017-19 Biennial Budget bill by the State Assembly:

“After months of work with my colleagues and stakeholders, I believe we have a budget bill that will continue to make our state the best place to live, work, and raise a family. We make historic investments in education, protect the taxpayer, and work to provide students and workers with the tools to succeed in careers and life at an affordable cost. Budgets are about priorities, and the work we have done on this bill will absolutely improve lives. I proudly voted in favor of this final product that truly moves Wisconsin Forward,” Rep. Felzkowski said.

The following is a list of priority items included in the 2017-19 Biennial Budget bill:

- Increases state aid by \$639 million to Wisconsin’s K-12 school districts, including new, targeted aid to over 200 frugal, low-spending districts.
- Focuses on retaining and rewarding great teachers by creating a lifetime license for teachers and administrators that complete six semesters of successful experience.
- Keeps property taxes lower than 2010, 2014, and today.
- Freezes tuition for another two years for in-state undergraduate students and creates an outcomes-based funding model based on system-wide goals.
- Substantially increases funding for local road aids, including an additional \$10 million over the biennium to focus on improving local bridges.
- Increases funding for workforce training programs to continue to prepare Wisconsin workers to succeed.

- Preserves competition within the health care insurance marketplace, improves transparency with reserve funds, and provides additional legislative oversight over the Group Insurance Board (GIB).
- Modernizes our state's emergency communications systems, including 911 and WISCOM.

Rep. Felzkowski continued, "I particularly appreciate our efforts to fund a critically needed improvement to our current 911 system. Our upgrade to Next Generation 911, as well as our reforms to the interoperability council, will genuinely modernize our emergency communications and keep both our first responders and our citizens safe."

"At the end of the day, this is a budget that makes government more accountable to and more efficient for Wisconsinites. It supports our hard-working families, students, businesses, and the most vulnerable in our state, while confirming our immense commitment to our job as good stewards of taxpayer dollars," Rep. Felzkowski concluded.

The budget bill now heads to the Senate. After passage, it will move to the Governor's desk for signature.

Representative Felzkowski represents the 35th Assembly District which includes portions of Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, and Shawano Counties.