

Rep. Kitchens: Statement on signed state budget

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Madison- Representative Joel Kitchens (R-Sturgeon Bay) released a statement following Governor Walker's signing of the 2017-2019 state budget:

"I am proud to have voted for a budget that moves our state in the right direction and I am happy that the Governor has signed it into law. There is a lot in this budget that will propel our state and our district forward.

This budget contains the largest investment in K-12 education made by the state, providing school districts with \$639 million in funding. There will be an increase in per pupil aid by \$200 per pupil in the first year and \$204 in the second year.

"I am disappointed that the Governor vetoed the low revenue adjustment for school districts and believe this provision would have provided immediate and eventual relief to several schools in the 1st district. I am eager to continue to work with my legislative colleagues and the Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding, which I will be chairing, to address the broad issues our school districts face and come up with solutions that will propel our school districts forward.

"There was another veto by the Governor that unfortunately negatively impacted our district. The Door County Medical Center had requested a transfer of 18 nursing home beds for their new nursing facility. Our district comes away with a net loss in nursing home beds in this biennium, which is a fact I find troubling since Door County is the third oldest county in the entire state. I appreciate that the Governor acknowledged that this is something that we must deal with head on. I look forward to continuing to work to find solutions to address the growing needs of our rapidly aging population with caregivers in the district and my colleagues down in Madison. "Overall, this budget contained multiple substantial wins for our district, including funding for a TMDL study of our rivers, a grant to rebuild our beloved Eagle Tower and \$3.2 million for the Sturgeon Bay Harbor Project. I am extremely grateful to the

Governor for realizing the impact and value of these projects to our region. I will proudly continue to advocate for our district's needs as this session moves forward.”