

Rep. Rohrkaste: Votes to approve biennial budget

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Madison, WI –State Representative Mike Rohrkaste (R-Neenah) issued the following statement after the passage of the 2017-19 biennial budget by the State Assembly. “Because of prudent decisions in the past, Republicans have been able to accomplish significant cost-saving reforms in this budget while at the same time delivering tax relief and a massive investment in K-12 and college education. This budget invests in Wisconsin’s students, teachers, and school districts by providing a historic increase in state aid of \$639 million. It also provides \$16 million in new dollars for special education and mental health services for students in schools. These increases will ensure that all students in Wisconsin receive an effective education, no matter where they live,” said Rep. Rohrkaste.

The 2017-19 state budget further provides opportunities to those seeking new and better careers through increased worker training funding of \$11.5 million and \$15 million in financial aid for students seeking a technical or four-year college degree. This budget also freezes tuition for another two years for in-state undergraduate students. The current freeze has already saved the average student \$6,300 over the last four years.

Rohrkaste continued, “In this budget, Republicans have shown once again that we are determined to invest in our workforce, our K-12 and higher education students, and deliver tax relief for middle-class Wisconsinites. This budget completely eliminates the state portion of the property tax and repeals a portion of the personal property tax, which is an overly burdensome tax paid by many small business owners throughout Wisconsin. Additionally, this budget delivers on the promise that the average median-value home will have a lower property tax burden today than it did in 2010 or 2014.”

Regarding transportation funding, this budget reduces borrowing, increases construction efficiencies to reduce costs, provides more funding to local roads and bridges, and still keeps our major projects going including the critical 441 Interchange in the Fox Cities. Also, Representative Rohrkaste personally fought for the inclusion of the Airport Rescue and Fire Fighting training facility at the Appleton International Airport, which will bring new economic development to the Fox Cities. While we still need a long-term fix for transportation, this budget provides significant improvements for our roads in the next two years.

“Budgets are about priorities, and we have focused on education, roads, and continued tax and cost-saving reforms,” said Rohrkaste. “I will continue to fight for families in the Fox Cities and to make sure Wisconsin continues to be a great place to live, work and enjoy life”.

The budget bill will now head to the state Senate for consideration before going to Governor Walker to be signed into law.