

Rep. Wachs: Comments on significant delays in capital budget

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MADISON-On Tuesday, February 21, the Wisconsin Capital Budget was released. Included were the various agency requests and the recommendations made by Governor Walker. Rep. Dana Wachs (D-Eau Claire), a member of the Building Commission, commented on the requests and the numerous projects that were recommended for deferral:

“The projects that Governor Walker recommended to defer in the Capital Budget prove once again that he would rather place the burden of building and maintaining our state’s infrastructure on the shoulders of future generations. Like our crumbling roads and bridges, state buildings are outdated and in many cases failing. The point of a solid building program is to serve the people of Wisconsin in a safe and efficient manner. Unfortunately, this capital budget is the victim of disastrous budgeting over the past six years.”

Among the projects that Governor Walker recommended to be deferred or denied:

- UW-Eau Claire – Haas Fine Arts Addition and Renovation – Phase 1 (Deferred)
- UW-Eau Claire – Governors Hall Addition and Renovation (Deferred)
- UW-River Falls – May Hall Addition and Renovation (Deferred)
- Chippewa Valley Correctional Treatment Facility – Utility Building and Boiler Replacement (Deferred)
- Cornell Ranger Station – Ranger Station Replacement (Deferred)
- Black River Falls Service Center – New Joint Forest Fire Operations Facility (Deferred)

- Western Wisconsin Hmong Cultural Center - Eau Claire (Denied)

“This style of delayed budgeting isn’t fiscally or structurally sound. Delays now will mean increased costs for future maintenance, renovation, or new construction. These outdated facilities are inefficient and fail to perform their intended duties. Also, the Governor’s failure to adequately fund our roads has put us in this difficult position. Now we have crumbling roads and old, inefficient buildings. We must be adults and fix these issues before we face major catastrophes or rack up massive bills that future generations will have to deal with.”