

Senate approves \$7 million campaign to bring workers to Wisconsin

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A bill that would set aside funding for a multi-million dollar marketing program to attract more workers to Wisconsin is now heading to Gov. Scott Walker's desk after clearing the Senate 17-15.

While the bill received some bipartisan support in the Assembly when it cleared that chamber last month, GOP Sen. Rob Cowles joined all Dems in opposing the plan.

Prior to the legislation's passage, Dems argued the bill showed the gov and Republicans were open to "foolishly spending" in the final days of the spring session, in the words of Sen. Tim Carpenter.

"You might as well just drive down to Illinois, roll down the window and throw out \$7 million," said Sen. Jon Erpenbach, D-Middleton. "You're not giving them a reason to come back."

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The chamber also rejected two Dem amendments to the bill, including one that would instead send \$6.8 million to the Department of Workforce Development for workforce training funding.

Under the bill, \$6.8 million in one-time GPR dollars would be set aside for the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation and other state agencies to develop and implement an advertising campaign that could run through mid-2019.

The campaign would be headed by WEDC, DWD and the Departments of Tourism and Veterans Affairs.