

Senate, Assembly approve transpo extraordinary session bill

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The state Senate approved the first of three extraordinary session bills Tuesday evening after pulling a provision that Dems warned would prevent local governments from using their employees to do some road work if the project were funded with state money.

The bill also includes provisions that would make explicit in state law that new revenue from online sales will go to income tax reductions and to federalize state tax law on pass-through entities.

There was no debate on the bill in the Senate, which was [approved 18-15](#) with all Republicans in favor and all Dems opposed. Only Sen. Jon Erpenbach, D-Middleton, spoke during the debate, chiding Republicans for calling the extraordinary session in the first place.

Members of the state Assembly traded barbs over the legislation and the late-night extraordinary session process, before the bill was passed 57-27.

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“This attacks workers, it attacks women-owned business, it harms the environment and it just throws away opportunities for workers in Wisconsin and American workers,” said Rep. Katrina Shankland, D-Stevens Point. “This whole legislative lame-duck session is about overriding the will of the voters.”

Rep. Mary Felzkowski, R-Irma, who runs a business of her own, argued she and others like her don’t need “special treatment” to compete.

“The majority of women I know that own a business don’t need nor want a handout,” the Assembly Assistant Majority Leader said. “Again, the gentle lady from

the 71st is very young; I'm sure she's not a business owner, and thinks that we all need to be subsidized — most Millennials do.”

In the Senate, Erpenbach accused Assembly Speaker Robin Vos, R-Rochester, of having a “Napoleonic complex.” He also chided Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald, for saying he doesn't trust Tony Evers, adding the Juneau Republican doesn't know the Dem gov-elect.

He argued the Legislature's actions in the extraordinary session weren't legitimate.

“The only thing the voters are going to remember about tonight is their vote didn't matter,” Erpenbach said.

The Joint Finance Committee amended the bill to add a prohibition on local governments from using their own workforce or contracting with another political subdivision for a local road or bridge project funded, in whole or in part, with state money. The provision also says local governments would have to bid out any local road or bridge project funded with state money.

But that piece of the bill was removed Tuesday as GOP Sen. Duey Stroebel, who authored the amendment, said the JFC change wasn't meant to prohibit local governments from doing their own road work.

The bill also includes a provision limiting how the Department of Transportation uses federal money for road work. In doing so, backers want to limit the number of projects that are required to meet federal standards, which can be more expensive than state benchmarks.