

# Dave Considine: The People's Budget - and you - are being ignored

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It is commonly said that budgets are about priorities. The easiest way to find out these priorities is by asking people – like you – what is important. I do this often, and I recently finished up a round of 8 listening sessions around the district. Governor Evers and Lieutenant Governor Barnes did this recently as well. Before writing the budget, they held listening sessions across the state to hear from all Wisconsinites to ensure that they had a good sense of what the priorities of the people are. This is why the 2019-2021 Executive Budget is truly The People's Budget – it was built by Wisconsinites, for Wisconsinites, and it fully reflects the priorities of Wisconsinites.

One of these priorities is that the people of our state want us to accept federal funds to expand Medicaid. Governor Evers heard the overwhelming support for this and has included it in the budget. Medicaid expansion would help more people access affordable healthcare and would free up state dollars that could be invested in other programs, such as education.

Another priority for Wisconsinites is an economy that works for all of us – not a select few of us. Because of this, The People's Budget puts a cap on a corporate tax credit, the majority of which goes to a small percentage of people in Wisconsin. In fact, 80% of this corporate manufacturing credit goes to taxpayers who make more than \$1 million each year. By capping this credit, we will be able to fund our crumbling roads and infrastructure.

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Our roads are some of the worst in the nation, which hurts our tourism, our agriculture, and our wallets. However Governor Evers heard your concerns and the budget makes the largest biennial investment in Wisconsin transportation history. This not only funds our transportation projects and infrastructure needs, but will reduce our transportation debt by 2%.

Unfortunately, on May 1st the Republican Joint Finance Committee members announced that they plan to remove 131 of the proposals from The People's Budget, including Medicaid expansion. This is unacceptable because Medicaid expansion would allow us to invest in every Wisconsinite - not just Wisconsinites enrolled in Medicaid.

Under Medicaid expansion, millions of dollars of new investments would be possible, including increased access to mental health services, preventing childhood lead poisoning, and increased funding for providers in long-term care programs such as nursing homes.

If the Republican Joint Finance Committee members do not hear from you and continue on the path of deleting these important pieces of the budget, that would mean an incredible loss for our area. For just three of the counties I represent, we would be stripped of \$45 million dollars of funding. This includes:

\$23 million in Sauk County

\$16 million in Columbia County

\$6 million in Iowa County

The priorities of Wisconsinites are clear, but they're still being ignored. It is time for your representatives to listen to you. I encourage you to connect with your state legislators and explain why you believe what you believe. Ask them whether they support the majority of Wisconsinites, who agree that Wisconsin needs Medicaid expansion. Call your legislators today at (608)266-9960 or (800)362-9472.

To find more information on the county by county funding under the Medicaid expansion, go to <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/budget/county.htm>. For information on how to contact your legislators, call (608) 266-9960 or (800) 362-9472.

— *Considine, D-Baraboo, represents the 81st Assembly District.*