

Rep. Shankland: Playing politics with building projects is a new low

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MADISON – Yesterday, Republican members of the State Building Commission refused to recommend Governor Tony Evers' proposed capital budget, voting down the entire \$2.5 billion worth of construction projects across Wisconsin. Sen. Petrowski, Sen. Testin, Rep. Born, and Rep. Swearingen voted down each project, taking 84 individual 4-4 party line votes. All of the projects passed unanimously in Building Commission subcommittee meetings earlier this week.

The Capital Budget included a new cancer research facility, a juvenile mental health treatment center, DNR service centers, veteran nursing home upgrades, building projects across the University of Wisconsin System, and more.

Rep. Shankland issued the following statement:

“For decades, the Building Commission has voted to recommend building projects to the Joint Finance Committee. Today, Republicans voted down every single project — including projects like veterans homes and a cancer research facility — in a desperate and unprecedented temper tantrum. They’ve sacrificed long-established precedent and bipartisanship for their own party politics.

“What’s most disappointing about the deliberate undermining of this long-respected process is that it creates a divide and conquer mentality where individual building projects are pitted against each other, making it much more difficult for all of us to get our communities’ projects enumerated. I’m concerned about legislators’ ability to represent their districts and advocate for their communities in the future, now

that Republicans have employed this nuclear option.

“Playing politics with building projects is a new low. This is serious — our infrastructure matters. Many of these projects have badly needed this investment for too long, and voting against all the projects is an immature move that will cost us enormously in the long run. I’m especially disturbed to see Republican legislators pretend to support projects in their district, but then vote against recommending them. They had an opportunity to embrace bipartisan collaboration and to work with us to find solutions, but they chose instead to put their party first.”