

Sen. Nass: State budget heads to Governor Evers

Posted on Wednesday, Jun 26, 2019

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Sen. Steve Nass (608) 266-2635

Senator Steve Nass (R-Whitewater) issued the following press statement ahead of the pending passage of 2019-21 biennial budget (2019 Assembly Bill 56) in the State Senate. The bill will pass the Senate this afternoon now that 17 votes have been obtained. Senator Steve Nass will be voting against this version of the state budget.

“Today, I will cast my 15th vote on a biennial state budget. Over three decades, I have seen the good, bad and horrible in state fiscal management. Governor Evers’ proposed 2019-21 biennial budget was, by a wide margin, the most horrible document offered in three decades.

That being said, my Republican colleagues have unfortunately crafted a budget document filled with excessive and unsustainable spending levels. It is a budget developed based on spin and fails to live up to our conservative fiscal principles that had been the hallmark of Wisconsin Republicans since 2011.

I will vote No on behalf of the taxpayers and vigorously defend my vote.”

*Nass noted these key objections to the JFC version of the 2019-21 budget:

-It creates a \$1.4 billion structural deficit at the start of the next budget period (2021-23). By comparison, the last state budget under Governor Walker had a lower structural deficit of \$865 million.

-It generates a net statewide property tax increase of about 3%. It will be one of the largest increases in property taxes over the last decade.

-It authorizes \$81.7 billion in All Funds expenditures in the 2019-21 biennium; a 5.6% increase over the base year budget.

-It authorizes \$37.7 billion in total General Fund expenditures during the biennium (this Fund is financed by state income, sales and excise taxes); a 6.0% increase over the base year budget.

-It increases General Fund expenditures by \$2.13 billion over the biennium, but only leaves a staggeringly low closing balance of \$22.6 million on June 30, 2021.

-It authorizes a Capital Projects Budget utilizing bonding in the amount of \$1.9 billion. This would set a new historic high for the Capital Projects Budget. By comparison, the last budget under Governor Walker had a Capital Projects Budget of just \$1 billion.

-It authorizes the Department of Transportation to develop an implementation plan for a vehicle-miles driven tax on motorists starting in 2023.

-It authorizes an increase in the annual Automobile Registration Fee of \$10. The new annual fee would be \$85. This increase is estimated to cost motorists \$65 million over the biennium.

-It authorizes a \$25 increase in the annual Registration Fee for weight-based Pickup Trucks/SUVs/Minivans. The new annual registration fee would be \$100. This would potentially impact all pickup trucks, SUVs and minivans weighing between 4,500 pounds and 6,000 pounds. This increase is estimated to cost motorists \$26 million over the biennium.

-It authorizes a \$95 increase in the Vehicle Titling Fee. The current fee is \$69.50 and will increase to \$164.50. The increase is estimated to cost motorists \$273 million over the biennium.