

# Sen. Schachtner: Joins bipartisan opposition against Joint Committee on Finance's modified budget

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(MADISON) – The Wisconsin State Senate voted to pass the biennial budget as modified by the legislature's Joint Committee on Finance. Senator Patty Schachtner (D-Somerset) joined Democratic and Republican colleagues in voting against the modified budget and released the following statement:

“Throughout the budget process, we heard Wisconsinites speak out in support of Medicaid expansion, funding for schools, and investments in our fight against addiction.

“The budget passed today represents a budget of missed opportunities. Over the past few years, we have seen funding for K-12 education drop below 2011 levels when adjusting for inflation. Our roads continue to rank among the worst in the nation. Our economy continues to leave too many working families behind.

“The budget proposed by Governor Tony Evers presented an opportunity to make real investments in every Wisconsin community. A cornerstone of his budget was Medicaid expansion, which would have increased access to health care for 82,000 Wisconsinites, saved \$324 million in state spending, and brought in over \$1 billion in new federal funding to invest in other priorities like our roads, schools, and broadband.

“We need a budget that prioritizes the needs of our communities and takes on the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The budget passed today missed the mark on both counts.”

Relative to the governor's budget, the Republican-controlled Joint Committee on Finance's budget:

- Education:

- o Eliminated \$939.8 million from K-12 education including \$509.2 million from special education aid - which has not been increased in a decade.
- o Eliminated \$5.6 million from the school breakfast program. School district reimbursement rates for breakfast meals will remain at seven cents per meal under the cut.
- o Cut \$10.6 million from sparsity aid, which provides additional funding assistance to rural school districts.

- Taxes:

- o Eliminated \$33 million for the refundable portion of the Earned Income Tax Credit
- o Eliminated a 10 percent middle-class tax cut that would have provided \$833.6 million in income tax relief and replaces it with a smaller \$321.5 million cut that would protect a tax break for millionaires.

- Health Care:

- o Eliminated the governor's proposal to expand Medicaid, which would have reduced state spending by \$324.5 million and returned to state taxpayers over \$1 billion in federal funding.

- Behavioral and Mental Health:

- o Eliminated \$2.5 million for a grant program to fund regional crisis stability facilities for adults. Currently, individuals experiencing a mental health crisis are transported across the state to Winnebago at great human and financial expense to the individual, the individual's family, and law enforcement officers.
- o Cut \$38 million from aid to school mental health services.
- o Eliminated \$23.8 million from state contributions to county crisis intervention

services.

- Clean Water:
  - o Eliminated \$1.85 million from county land and water conservation staffing grants.
  - o Eliminated \$2.9 million from lake and river protection grant programs.

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