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Sen. Shilling: GOP budget misses the mark

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MADISON – Despite overwhelming public support for Governor Tony Evers' state budget proposal that addresses issues impacting Wisconsin families, Republican politicians settled for a budget full of missed opportunities. After securing their final votes with a last minute amendment crafted behind closed doors, the Republican majority is ignoring the will of voters, refusing to fund Wisconsin's core priorities, and limiting support for local communities.

"Wisconsin families are frustrated with fiscally irresponsible Legislative Republicans who would rather protect their special interest agenda and tax giveaways to the wealthy," said Senate Democratic Leader Jennifer Shilling (D-La Crosse). "The Republican budget acknowledges the failure of their policies over the past eight years but refuses to adopt the solutions and investments we need to protect our schools, health care and drinking water."

The Republican budget blocks Gov. Evers' proposal to invest $1.4 billion more into local classrooms and cuts over $500 million in special education funding from his budget; rejects $1.6 billion in federal funds to expand Medicaid and expand affordable health care access to 82,000 Wisconsinites; blocks funds to address the contaminated drinking water crisis; and cuts funding for local governments to fix potholes. Most troubling, the Republican refusal to accept federal funds to expand Medicaid will end up costing the state more money while covering fewer people.

Simply put the Republican budget:

- Cuts Gov. Tony Evers' special education funding proposal by 83% while increasing property taxes.
- Fails to meet the 2/3rd state funding commitment for public schools while spending more on vouchers for unaccountable private schools.
- Spends millions more taxpayer dollars in order to reject Medicaid funding and the enhanced care it could provide.
- Increases taxes on Wisconsin drivers while letting Minnesota and Illinois motorists off the hook for our increased road repair costs.
- Rejects funding for clean water protections while thousands of children continue to be poisoned by lead pipes.

"Gov. Tony Evers' original budget proposal was a responsible plan for families and communities that have been ignored for too long," added Sen. Shilling. "Instead of living with the failed policies of the past, we need to move forward with bold, innovative solutions that promote a fair economy and expand opportunities for families and communities. Democrats stand united in the belief that quality schools, affordable health care, and clean drinking water are vital to restoring Wisconsin's reputation as a place where the next generation wants to live, work, and raise a family. This budget misses the mark, and I will be voting no."