

# Dems use procedural move to block final vote on GOP tax package

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Senate Dems used a procedural move late this afternoon to put off a final vote on a \$392 million GOP package that would reduce income taxes, expand a property tax break for businesses and pay down debt.

Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald, R-Juneau, kicked off the debate saying he spoke with Gov. Tony Evers yesterday about the plan and the gov didn't rule out signing the proposal.

"I hope he really does look at it," Fitzgerald said.

Evers spokeswoman Britt Cudaback tweeted in response, "The governor told @SenFitzgerald he'll be as open to Republicans' tax bill as Republicans have been about passing his education plan."

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At the outset of the debate, Senate Minority Leader Jennifer Shilling, D-La Crosse, pitched the gov's proposal to use some of the expected surplus for a \$251.9 million education package. That proposal includes \$130 million in new school aids that would result in a corresponding reduction in property taxes.

"We can do both about addressing property taxes and investing in our schools and making our schools a priority," Shilling said.

Republicans rejected Dems' substitute amendment that would've replaced the GOP plan with the gov's proposal. Republicans then moved to a final vote on the GOP plan, but Sen. Jon Erpenbach, D-Middleton, objected to third reading. That prevented — at least for now — a final vote on the package.

Fitzgerald's office said the chamber would likely come back Thursday morning to vote on the package unless Dems lifted their objection to third reading. The Assembly planned to vote on the package after it convenes Thursday afternoon.