

Rep. Nygren: Governor Evers' budget cuts raises more questions

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Madison-State Representative John Nygren (R-Marinette), Co-Chair of the Joint Committee on Finance released the following statement:

"After claiming that he would cut state operations spending by 5%, the plan released by Governor Tony Evers today shows actual cuts to operations spending of less than 2.5%," Rep. Nygren said. "Making matters worse, nearly two-thirds of the cuts are being shouldered by the UW System. While Gov. Evers' initial announcement was promising, this additional information leaves more questions than answers."

The cuts announced by Gov. Evers raise questions about his priorities. While he has exempted the budgets of 25 state agencies, including his political buddies, Lt. Governor Mandela Barnes, State Treasurer Sarah Godlewski, and Secretary of State Doug La Follette, Gov. Evers has cut appropriations for farmer mental health, substance abuse and drunk driving prevention and treatment, and homelessness prevention.

Notably, Gov. Evers' plan cuts the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection by over \$1 million. The appropriations that Gov. Evers cut fund the Farm to School program and may be used for farmer mental health programs, including suicide prevention. Yet Lt. Gov. Barnes budget is safe from cuts.

Recent reports show an increase in domestic violence and drug overdoses during the pandemic. Despite this, Gov. Evers is cutting treatment and diversion programs, drug testing and treatment, and Milwaukee child welfare services. Yet Lt. Gov.

Barnes' budget is safe from cuts.

At a time that Governor Evers has a Task Force on Climate and has set a 100% renewable energy goal, his cuts include over \$1.3 million intended to pay for renewable energy in the state. Yet Lt. Gov. Barnes' budget is safe from cuts.

While the state is facing record high rates of unemployment, Gov. Evers is cutting popular worker training programs at the Department of Workforce Development. Yet Lt. Gov. Barnes' budget is safe from cuts.

After criticizing Republicans on homelessness funding, Gov. Evers is cutting the operations of the Department of Administration housing division, which deals with homelessness and the homelessness council. Yet Lt. Gov. Barnes' budget is safe from cuts.

"One clear winner in Governor Evers' cuts is Lt. Governor Mandela Barnes," said Rep. Nygren. "Gov. Evers has exempted the Lt. Governor's office from any reduction. The Governor also vetoed any limit to the security costs of the Lt. Governor in the state budget. The taxpayers of Wisconsin deserve better."