

Sen. Agard: Wisconsinites deserve a budget that reflects their shared values, GOP effort falls short

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MADISON- Today, the Wisconsin State Senate voted on the GOP budget proposal for the 2021-23 biennium. The budget will now go to Governor Evers' desk. Senator Melissa Agard (D-Madison) released the following statement regarding her vote against the Republican authored budget:

“When Governor Evers introduced his 2021-23 budget proposal back in February, one thing was abundantly clear – he listened to what Wisconsinites across the state wanted and crafted a budget that represents the will of the people. I respect the governor’s approach because it serves as a guide for what elected officials should be focused on every day in the Capitol: improving the lives of hardworking people. Our state government should work for everyone, not just the wealthy and well connected. It is our duty to ensure that ordinary people have confidence that their voice is reflected in the work we do.

“Many of the items Republicans stripped from the budget are issues that have widespread public support, like increasing access to health care through Medicaid expansion, legalizing cannabis, creating fair maps, ensuring clean water, expanding broadband, and increasing equity. These aren’t partisan priorities, they’re Wisconsin priorities. Removing these core provisions show that Republicans are increasingly out of touch with what people want in this state, and are instead more interested in unrealistic political ploys than honest governing.

“I’m disappointed that there are so many missed opportunities in this budget. We

had the opportunity to invest in health care by finally expanding Medicaid and taking advantage of the one-time chance to bring in an additional \$1.6 billion federal dollars. Republicans said no. We had the opportunity to make a significant investment in rural broadband by committing \$200 million in state dollars. Republicans chose to reduce this number to a borrowed \$125 million. We had the opportunity to make a generational investment in our children with \$1.6 billion toward K-12 public education. Republicans slashed that to \$256 million, a fraction of what the governor proposed.

“I want what is best for Wisconsin. I want our great state to be left in a better place than where we found it for our children. I will never stop advocating for policies that the fabulous people of Wisconsin deserve, and I will continue to come to work every day with your voices and hopes in mind.”