

# Sen. Larson: “Republicans choose the wealthy few over you”

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**Milwaukee, WI** - Today, the Republican-controlled Senate voted on a radically different budget than was initially proposed by Governor Evers. State Senator Chris Larson (D-Milwaukee) voted against this budget because it fails to address the needs of Wisconsinites. Specifically, it fails our children. Sen. Larson issued the following statement regarding the budget vote:

“I am deeply disappointed the Republicans chose to throw away an opportunity to address our state’s generational needs, and fund the kind of recovery our state needs. Our neighbors just suffered through the worst pandemic in a century. At a time where there are funds to address the foundational problems that exacerbate the disparities in our state, this budget misses the opportunity. Denying resources to those who struggled and sacrificed the most, is like dancing in a graveyard. Not funding the kids, teachers, and education professionals who sacrificed so much to make last year work is shameful. Our children deserve better; they deserve legislators who will fight for them.

“Governor Evers’ proposed budget, could not take into account the additional \$2.3 billion in federal aid because we did not know we would get those funds. I’m certain Governor Evers would invest the additional funding to bump up education funding, special education reimbursements, and mental health services. Passing a budget without taking this unprecedented influx of funds into consideration is like leaving a bag of groceries in your cart in the store parking lot.

“With the \$4.4 billion surplus and the \$2.3 billion in federal aid, we could accomplish bold initiatives that would guarantee we build back better than before the pandemic. We could fully fund Pre-K for our children, increase the special education reimbursement rate to 60%, and restore our historic two-thirds funding

commitment for schools. Education is a top priority of our neighbors, it should be a top priority in our budget too.

“Instead of ensuring working Wisconsinites earn a salary they can live on, or have access to affordable health care, Republicans are balancing the budget on the backs of our neighbors living paycheck-to-paycheck. They would rather cut the wealthy’s taxes than grant over 90,000 Wisconsinites at 138% of the poverty line affordable health care or capture for our state \$1.6 billion in federal funding. The budget makes conservative politics clear: they are focused on helping the wealthy few over you.

“As Republicans pursue their extreme partisan agenda, they are putting Wisconsin prosperity at real risk and leaving working and middle-class families behind. Instead of properly funding education, they’re offering Chuck-E-Cheese tokens to our schools and children. Governor Evers’ budget offered us a step forward out of this pandemic, the budget that Republicans forced through the legislature would drag us backward. I voted no on this underwhelming budget, and I hope that the Governor will also reject this anemic proposal with his veto pen. The future of Wisconsin is on the line.”