

Sen. Larson: The road back - Governor's Budget charts a fresh course to a renewed Badger State

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Milwaukee, WI - "The COVID-19 pandemic has ravaged communities, upended our economy, and disrupted daily life to a greater degree than any even since World War II. It would be understandable, perhaps even expected to put all our efforts toward merely getting back to where we were in February of 2020. Before most people knew what a Zoom meeting was, before working from home became commonplace, and when wearing a surgical mask at the grocery store would have produced more than a few unfriendly looks.

"Governor Evers could have presented a budget with that goal in mind - to merely get back to where we once were, without any fundamental changes in our approach. Thankfully, he charted a far better course, by presenting a budget that dares us to think bigger.

"By expanding BadgerCare under the Affordable Care Act, we will improve access to quality, affordable healthcare for those who might not otherwise be able to afford it.

"By enacting policies to lower prescription drug prices, we help realize our belief that nobody should have to choose between putting food on the table and buying the medications they need to stay healthy.

"By legalizing cannabis, we can provide a jumpstart to our economy while helping to right past wrongs of a drug war that has disproportionately harmed communities of color.

“By bumping up the special education reimbursement for our public schools, Wisconsin can once again move closer to fulfilling the promise of every child getting access to a quality public education.

“By investing in our small businesses, many of which have struggled mightily just to survive this past year of pandemic-driven losses, we ensure the majority of our Wisconsin workforce can rest easier knowing they can provide for their families without being forced to a punitive and unreliable safety net that’s chock full of holes.

“I challenge my Republican colleagues to put partisanship aside and – as we did last April with the passage of our first (and sadly our only) comprehensive COVID-19 relief bill – work together for the benefit of our shared constituency – the hardworking people of the great state of Wisconsin.”