

WisDems: ICYMI - Up North News Wisconsin: against it before they were for it: some Wisconsin politicians are busy promoting American Rescue Plan funds

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Madison, Wis. — Yesterday, [Up North News Wisconsin](#) blasted the Wisconsin GOP for promoting the American Rescue Plan, despite the fact that the Republican Party voted against the critical federal relief.

Republicans in Congress stood in unified partisan opposition to the American Rescue Plan, and Wisconsin Republicans in the state legislature went as far as [attempting to slow down relief distribution](#) across the state. Now, those same Republicans who all parroted criticisms of the bill — like failed candidate [Derrick Van Orden](#), [Representative Glenn Grothman](#), and [Representative Tom Tiffany](#) — are all too eager to credit for the federal funds.

Read the full column below:

Up North News: [Against It Before They Were For It: Some Wisconsin Politicians Are Busy Promoting American Rescue Plan Funds](#)

“This is very good news for my district,” state Rep. Rob Summerfield (R-Bloomer) [said](#) this week about a new round of grants that will help telecommunications providers increase internet service across his western Wisconsin district.

As chair of the Assembly committee overseeing technology issues, Summerfield has had good reason to cheer the latest round of 83 grants awarded by the state Public Service Commission across 43 counties.

At the opposite end of the state, Rep. Samantha Kerkman (R-Salem Lakes) and Sen. Van Wanggaard (R-Racine) were equally effusive about grants benefiting Kenosha County. “Residents and business owners in these communities can now move forward knowing that reliable broadband internet is on the horizon,” Kerkman [said](#).

What they and other Republicans aren’t saying as loudly is that the increased amount of money available for these state grants is actually federal funding provided by the American Rescue Plan Act, the major pandemic stimulus proposed by President Joe Biden which passed Congress in March without a single vote from Republicans, who claimed the plan was too costly.

US Rep. Glenn Grothman (R-Glenbeulah) was one of those 212 votes against the Rescue Plan. Two weeks after it became law, Grothman’s Twitter account [trumpeted](#) the availability of direct cash relief for Wisconsin families struggling through the coronavirus outbreak. “The IRS has begun delivering the third round of stimulus checks,” he posted. “For information about the status of your check or questions about eligibility, visit the COVID19 page on my website.”

Weeks later, Grothman was [tweeting](#) about one of the provisions that has assisted small businesses across the state. “The Restaurant Revitalization Fund will provide relief to food and drink businesses in-need following COVID19 lockdowns and capacity limitations,” he posted in promoting the availability of applications for aid.

Other Republican members of the state’s congressional delegation have been critical of the Rescue Plan even as it brought significant help to hometowns in their districts.

Rep. Bryan Steil [said](#) of the plan in March, “The spending bill bails out reckless spending cities like Chicago and shortchanges hardworking hometowns like Janesville.” Earlier this month, the Janesville city council began allocating the nearly \$12 million in aid. A staff [memo outlined uses](#) that could include replacing lead in

the water infrastructure and developing affordable “working class” housing for families.

Rep. Tom Tiffany (R-Hazelhurst) [hosted](#) a roundtable on the Restaurant Revitalization Fund, bringing attention to the business benefit but also criticizing the additional aid to unemployed Wisconsin workers. Prior to passage, Tiffany wrote a [letter](#) to Democratic Sen. Tammy Baldwin and Republican Sen. Ron Johnson asking them to vote against the Biden plan.

Tiffany, Johnson, and the other Republicans voted against the American Rescue Plan’s [numerous](#) forms of relief brought to Wisconsin which include:

- Nearly \$7 billion in direct stimulus aid to Wisconsin families in 2.7 million households
- Nearly \$4 billion to [small businesses](#) through the Paycheck Protection Program.
- \$1.6 billion in relief to Wisconsin K-12 school districts.
- 1.1 million children were impacted by an expanded child tax credit that included monthly payments from the IRS to qualifying families. Another 321,000 childless workers received up to \$1,000 from the earned income tax credit.
- Lower health insurance premiums in the Affordable Care Act marketplace for families who lost healthcare coverage because of pandemic-related layoffs.
- \$2.1 billion for Wisconsin municipalities that have used the aid for [everything from](#) backfilling strained budgets for local services and repairing water and sewer infrastructure to campaigns encouraging COVID vaccinations and reducing housing evictions.
- \$2.7 billion for the state government aid that Gov. Tony Evers has distributed in areas that include small business grants, pandemic response efforts, and infrastructure funding such as the broadband internet projects Republican legislators are touting.

“Wisconsin families have had enough of Republicans’ obstructionism and hypocrisy,” said Democratic Party of Wisconsin chair Ben Wikler in a release about GOP legislators’ reaction to the Rescue Plan funds. “Make no mistake: every single Democrat in Congress voted for President Biden’s American Rescue Plan, and Governor Evers has implemented it — while every single Republican voted against it.”