

Rep. Goyke, Sen. Smith: Introduce legislation to restore a fair share for all local governments

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Rep. Goyke and Sen. Smith call for increase in shared revenue payments to support public communities statewide following a decade of Republican inaction

MADISON - Today, as a part of the Legislative Democrats' bill package to address public safety, Rep. Goyke (D-Milwaukee) and Sen. Smith (D-Brunswick) introduced legislation to increase State Shared Revenue payments to local governments by 2% each year. This policy was included in Governor Evers' budget proposal last year, but was removed from consideration by legislative Republicans.

Shared Revenue has been stagnant since Republicans took control of the Legislature in 2011. Raising Shared Revenue would return hard-earned tax dollars back to local governments to be directed towards critical local services like public safety. According to the nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau, the second largest expenditure for counties and municipalities is public safety services, which includes law enforcement.

"The current fiscal relationship between the State and local governments is not sustainable. Shared Revenue payments have decreased by 9% since 2011 while local government public safety expenditures alone - one of many quality of life services provided locally - have increased by 16.7%," said Rep. Goyke. "This disparity forces our local governments to make tough choices when trying to fund critical services in their communities."

“As a former Brunswick Town Board Chair I personally understand the strain that our local units of government are under to provide critical services and stay within budget,” added Sen. Smith. “By withholding state support for years, Republicans have made it even harder for local officials to cover the costs of law enforcement and first responder services. This legislation will begin to recoup the costs our local communities are owed to ensure the public safety of Wisconsin residents.”

The bill is currently circulating for co-sponsors in the State Assembly and State Senate.