

# Sen. Stroebel: Federal windfall should not be ignored in transportation spending debate

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Today, the Joint Committee on Finance voted to approve a slightly modified version of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's federal expenditure plan for the allocation of increased federal infrastructure funding. These additional funds stem from the federal infrastructure bill that was signed into law in November 2021 and funded through a separate act of U.S. Congress in March 2022.

Wisconsin is set to receive an additional \$283 million in federal infrastructure funding for the current fiscal year, with 56 percent allocated to local projects and 44 percent allocated to state projects under the expenditure plan. Altogether, it is estimated that Wisconsin will receive an additional \$1.3 billion in federal funding for roads and bridges over the next five years. Sen. Stroebel (R - Cedarburg) issued the following statement regarding the expenditure plan and today's vote in the Joint Finance Committee:

*"For years, Wisconsinites were subjected to an aggressive public messaging campaign. This campaign sought to convince the residents of our state that anything short of the Legislature providing a blank check for transportation infrastructure spending was unacceptable, as crumbling roads and bridges would be the inevitable result."*

*"The interests who stood to reap the benefits of forcing Wisconsinites to fork over more of their hard-earned money to the state's transportation fund finally got their way in July 2019, when Gov. Evers signed into law a budget that increased vehicle registration and title fees to the tune of roughly \$360 million. Now Wisconsin will receive approximately \$260 million in additional federal dollars for roads and*

*bridges over each of the next five years. In light of this windfall from the federal government, the Legislature should question the need for any additional 'revenue uppers' for the state's transportation fund for the foreseeable future."*

*"Nevertheless, it bears reminding that any windfall of federal money comes with strings attached. One would be hard-pressed to find a source of federal aid with more costly red tape than transportation spending. I have already heard from several town and village officials who intend to forego applying for a share of the federal money because of the steep costs associated with the federal government's mandates. Excessive front-end engineering reviews, onerous regulations and mandatory union labor requirements unnecessarily waste many of these transportation dollars. The federal policies are a disservice to our residents and unfairly benefit politically-connected special interests."*

Senator Stroebel represents the 20th Senate District which includes parts of Ozaukee, Washington, Fond du Lac, Calumet and Sheboygan Counties.