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WisDems: Chair Ben Wikler, Wisconsin legislative leaders call for passing Gov. Evers' budget surplus plan at tomorrow's special session

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MADISON, Wis. – Earlier today, in advance of the special session requested by Governor Evers to consider his plan for the unprecedented $3.8 billion surplus, Democratic Senate Leader Janet Bewley, Democratic Assembly Leader Greta Neubauer, and Democratic Caucus Chair Senator Jeff Smith joined Democratic Party of Wisconsin Chair Ben Wikler to highlight the financial relief the proposal would provide for Wisconsinites.

To help residents address rising costs, Gov. Evers' plan gives the money back to the people of Wisconsin through the following programs:

- $150 tax rebate for every Wisconsin tax filer and each of their dependents
- Expand the Child and Dependent Care Credit, giving an average of $274 back to more than 100,000 Wisconsinites
- Create a new $100 million Caregiver Tax Credit, benefiting approximately 370,000 tax filers
- Nearly $750 million to improve education quality while keeping property taxes down

The Democratic leaders called on the Republican majority to join them in voting to pass the plan to give Wisconsinites their money back. Republicans, who have already called the plan a "non-starter," have failed to introduce their own plan to address rising costs.

WATCH THE FULL EVENT HERE.

Democratic Party of Wisconsin Chair Ben Wikler: “Republicans’ only plan for this money is to do nothing – it’s to delay doing anything at all with it until they think it is politically expedient for them. At a time when our state and our country are fighting rising costs and the financial impacts of global conflicts, we need to take action to help Wisconsinites, right now. This is not the time to procrastinate or play political games. As Governor Evers said, this is the people’s money, let’s give it back to them.”

Democratic Caucus Chair Sen. Jeff Smith: “Nothing is more important to the future of Wisconsin than our kids. That’s why Democrats have fought tooth and nail over the past four years to increase our investments in public schools. While the governor’s latest budget restored the state’s two-thirds funding commitment to public schools finally, we still have more work to do, to ensure our kids and our teachers have the resources they need. With this budget surplus, we have a unique opportunity […] to make a massive difference in the lives of Wisconsin’s families. […] [Less than] five years ago, Wisconsin’s K-12 schools dropped to 18th in the nation. After our investments under Governor Evers, Wisconsin’s K-12 schools are now ranked in the top ten. Let’s use this money to make sure we keep it that way.”

Democratic Assembly Leader Greta Neubauer: “We cannot and we should not sit on the sidelines while people struggle. We need to be clear: the state legislature could help address rising costs tomorrow. We could pass a tax refund of $150 per filer, $600 for a family of four. That’s money for groceries, for gas, to help with the cost of prescription drug costs or pay your water, electric, and internet bills. We have the funds to give you your money back. And we could do it this week. But Republican Legislators are planning to stand in the way — because they would rather see the governor fail than see our state succeed.”

Democratic Senate Leader Sen. Janet Bewley: “The district that I represent, the 25th, is the district that is growing old, fastest. […] We’re rural. We lack the number of nursing homes in the centers that can take care of people through assisted living and other gradations of care. Many people will live in their homes for as long as they possibly can, and count on caregivers and family members to keep them safe and comfortable. As a mother, as a grandmother, I know these challenges and the additional burden of those potential caregivers to take care of their own children.

[…] Wisconsin's 600,000 unpaid family caregivers have long faced challenges. That's why it's time to create a new caregiver tax credit, meaning the state will actually save money by investing in family caregivers. AARP Wisconsin has urged support of Governor Evers' surplus plan because it does what's right for families."