

Rep. Baldeh: GOP hits the mute button on the voice of the people

Posted on Thursday, May 11, 2023

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

MADISON - This morning, the Assembly Committee on Local Government held an executive session on Assembly Bill (AB) 245, the Republican plan to overhaul shared revenue. Democratic members of the Committee introduced an amendment to strip the bill of numerous unrelated policy issues favored by GOP special interests, and return it to a “clean” form, focused only on the fiscal overhaul. The motion was defeated, with all Republicans voting no.

In response, Rep. Samba Baldeh (D-Madison) and Rep. Melissa Ratcliff (D-Cottage Grove) released the following statement:

“While Republicans have focused on the fiscal implications of AB 245, the laundry list of unnecessary provisions in this bill makes it a Frankenstein’s monster of problematic and unrelated policies.

“As it stands, this bill would make county and city advisory referenda illegal! Millions of Wisconsin voters have used referenda to make their voices heard and now the GOP is hitting the mute button. This is retaliation against counties that overwhelmingly voted for a fair maps commission and against GOP gerrymandered maps, for cannabis legalization, and for protecting access to reproductive care. The GOP wants to pick their voters and then hit the mute button when they speak.

“This bill strips our local health officers from exercising their professional responsibilities and expertise in event of an epidemic of a communicable disease. This is another act of retaliation in response to efforts of public health agencies to protect us during the COVID pandemic.

“AB 245 substitutes the opinions of GOP legislators for the judgement of the people

of Milwaukee and their elected representatives. These provisions include everything from disallowing funding for the streetcar system, to requiring schools to hire 25 police officers at an estimated cost of \$2 million! Burying all of these provisions keeps this out of the public's view.

“Republicans seemingly never tire of talking about how they are the ‘voice of the people’ and that the lowest levels of government know what’s best for communities. Their votes today, fly directly against those claims. Clearly, Republicans have no issue with their own hypocrisy as long as they have a chance to gain more power.”