

Rep. Madison: AB 245 leverages pain in local communities to force them into accepting a shared revenue formula that is far less than they deserve

Posted on Thursday, May 18, 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 – Tonight, Assembly Republicans passed a rushed shared revenue bill on a 56-36 vote.

Representative Madison (D-10) issued the following statement:

“Zora Neale Hurston once said, ‘If you’re silent about your pain, they’ll kill you and say you loved it.’

Republicans have had the opportunity to address shared revenue since 2011, but instead, they sat on their hands while local communities reached a breaking point. Now, we come to these communities when they are at their most vulnerable and we are forcing them to accept far less than they deserve. Nobody wins in this plan – Villages, Towns, Cities, and Counties will all be stripped of local control and budgetary autonomy.

Even as the Legislature has starved Milwaukee of its fair share of revenue for over two decades, we have continued to function and make innovative budget cuts just to survive. This is all while the city of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County have contributed over \$400 million to the state in taxes over the last 10 years. We are just looking for our fair share, but unfortunately, AB 245 does not provide the needed investments in Milwaukee or Milwaukee County.

AB 245 takes away the ability of local municipalities to exercise local control over policing. Well, let me tell you about just a few of the many negative interactions with law enforcement that I have had in my life. At age 12, I was walking home from school by myself in an affluent neighborhood when officers detained me and questioned me for 40 minutes. They had no reason, there was no accountability, and I had to face that trauma at that age without my parents present. At age 15, I was at the lakefront enjoying the 4th of July with my friends when officers arrived and gathered about 50 young people of color, including us. Through a combination of squad cars and horseback, the officers herded us like cattle and forced us to walk over 4 miles, all the way to the North side of Milwaukee - assuming that we all lived there. At 17 years old, I was waiting at a bus stop when 2 young people attempted to assault me. As I was defending myself, two cop cars drove straight past me. As a young Black man, was I not worth protecting? When Republicans imply that investing exclusively in the police is the same as investing in public safety, they are missing the bigger picture and how police impact my community.

AB 245 would also eliminate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion positions and investments in a city with some of the worst racial disparities in the country: modern-day redlining, the mass incarceration of Black males, reading levels, maternal and infant health, and so many other disparities. To say that we should not be examining the relationships between race, class, and gender on all of these issues ignores hard evidence and the lived experience of the most vulnerable populations in our state.

Under AB 245, everyone is being forced to fight over a small fixed pot of money. Instead of legislating under the yoke of austerity, we should be expanding the pot of money so that everyone wins. AB 245 is not what my community deserves and we must do better.”