

# Rep. Moore Omokunde: Statement on state budget passage

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MADISON - Today, the Wisconsin State Assembly convened to vote on Senate Bill 70, the executive budget act of the 2023 state legislature. The budget was amended countless times by Republicans on the Joint Finance Committee so that it is a shell of what the Governor originally proposed back in February. The budget ultimately passed the Assembly 64-34 and now heads for the Governor's desk.

State Representative Supreme Moore Omokunde twice rose to speak on amendments to Senate Bill 70, first to address funding for mental health infrastructure improvements and resources:

**“2023 is supposed to be the Year of Mental Health in Wisconsin. Back in February, the Governor proposed \$500 million for mental health programs in this state budget. And yet only a few months later, JFC Republicans saw fit to cut more than half of this funding without even providing for debate on the matter. Perhaps most egregious was cutting an investment of \$235 million in mental health services for Wisconsin children and schools.**

**We sit on a \$7 billion surplus and yet the Republicans want to save it all for a “rainy day”, as though it hasn't been raining on the majority of Wisconsinites every day over the past 3+ years... I plead for the Wisconsin GOP to stop playing games with our mental health - invest in the people of Wisconsin while we have the means to do so or our mental health crisis will continue to escalate.”**

Representative Moore Omokunde then rose again to speak on funding that was stripped from the budget in relation to environmental justice:

**“I feel like every time I rise to speak in this body about the ongoing climate crisis, Wisconsin is in the midst of some 1-in-100 years’ climate event. This week, our state has suffered some of the worst air quality in our state’s history... The climate crisis is coming - in fact, take a deep breath outside this week and you’ll find it’s already here. Republicans cannot once again continue to wait for a rainy day to spend our state surplus; as we can see this week, you are literally endangering the health and wellbeing of all Wisconsinites with every second that you wait.**

**More than simply preventing worsening climate disasters, we have a major opportunity to attract people to Wisconsin with jobs in green industries like solar and wind power. Wisconsin, with all of our natural gifts and resources, should be the national hub for retraining workers for the 21<sup>st</sup> century green economy. To that end, the Governor proposed an investment of \$10 million in green job retraining - but that investment too was cut by the JFC Republicans without allowing for any debate. I look forward to re-introducing that investment as an Assembly Bill in the fall.”**

Representative Moore Omokunde represents the 17th Assembly District on the North and Northwest sides of Milwaukee.