

Rep. Stubbs: Governor Evers signs 2023-25 biennial budget

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MADISON, WI. — Today, Governor Tony Evers signed the 2023-25 biennial budget. Representative Shelia Stubbs (D-Madison) released the following statement:

“This morning, I was honored to stand alongside Governor Evers as he enacted the 2023-25 biennial budget. The budget signed into law is not the final fiscal plan we had hoped for, with several items that would propel our state forward and benefit all Wisconsinites ultimately excluded from the final budget sent to the governor’s desk by Republicans. Yet, our governor continues to prioritize many significant areas of investment in our state that will promote the wellbeing of our children and families, our working class, our industry, and our economy. With his broad, constitutional veto authority, Governor Evers worked diligently to alter the final budget to improve the critical fiscal plan. Now, the state legislature must act to introduce policy that will fill the gaps created by this less-than-ideal budget and improve the lives and wellbeing of all Wisconsinites.”

“Despite its faults, this budget makes historic progress in many key areas. The 2023-25 biennial budget provides over \$525 million to help expand access to safe, stable, affordable housing for working families. This provision will greatly improve the lives of working Wisconsinites and their families now and for generations to come. This budget also makes historic investments in communities across Wisconsin, with most municipalities expected to see at least a 20 percent increase in shared revenue. Cultivating a healthy and mutualistic relationship between local governments and our state government is key to our future growth as a state. The budget also includes substantial increases in compensation for many Wisconsin workers, including youth counselors, correctional officers, psychiatric care technicians, assistant district attorneys and public defenders. Each of these hard workers deserves to feel amply supported through fair compensation. A final

important victory to note is the protection of 188 positions in the UW System that relate to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The governor used his partial veto to keep these critically important positions in our public university system and in doing so, affirms his commitment to the ongoing fight for true equity in Wisconsin.”

“While this budget makes good progress on some key issues, there are still many improvements that must be made by legislators through future policy. This budget ensures \$15 million in the 2023-24 fiscal year at the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation can be used as grants to child care providers. This result is a far cry from the governor’s original proposal to invest more than \$300 million into the Child Care Counts Program that aided so many child care providers during and following the global pandemic to keep their doors open, pay fair wages to staff, and provide high-quality care for our children. While the result is a significant investment, it is not nearly enough to keep our child care industry afloat and it will be up to the legislature to create policy that continues to improve our child care industry. In another blow to our families, this budget excludes funding for universal school breakfasts and lunches. We know that not all of our students are properly nourished throughout their school day, greatly detracting from their ability to grow their minds. It is unacceptable to neglect the health and wellbeing of so many of our school-aged children and this failure to provide will fuel inequitable outcomes among our students. The budget excludes state funding for high-speed broadband, an area that must be addressed should we wish to keep up with 21st century workforce and education standards. And, rather than adhere to the tax cut plan proposed by the governor that would have seen over \$1.2 billion in targeted tax relief for caregivers, parents, seniors, veterans and their spouses, the middle and working class, Republicans brought forth a plan that provided significant relief to the wealthiest Wisconsin taxpayers. In response, through partial veto, Governor Evers eliminated the legislature’s tax cuts for the top two individual income tax brackets and preserved tax cuts in the bottom two brackets and will provide \$175 million in relief to Wisconsinites.”

“In each of his careful decisions, the governor prioritized the wellbeing of all Wisconsinites. The fight to create a budget that truly benefits our state was filled with heated negotiations and disappointment, but also compromise. While I am not satisfied with the budget, I am not ready to give up. Now, I and my Democratic colleagues will begin the upward battle of introducing legislation that will mend the holes left by this budget and properly aid the people of Wisconsin.”