

Sen. Felzkowski: Invests in northern Wisconsin

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Madison, WI - On Thursday, Senator Mary Felzkowski (R-Tomahawk) joined her colleagues on the Joint Finance Committee to approve fiscally responsible budget motions that promote Northwoods tourism, address rural healthcare shortages, prepare the state to usher federal broadband dollars into our communities, and buy down debt that will result in future savings.

The budget-writing Joint Finance Committee took up motions that will have a tremendous impact on bringing more tourists to our neck of the woods - including \$22 million for tourism marketing, ensuring we remain competitive with our neighboring states.

“From snowmobiling in the winter, to lake-life in the summer, tourism dollars are the best return on investment that we can make. Whether it’s our bars and restaurants, our hotels and lodging, or our extensive outdoor adventure industries, this investment is historic for our region of the state.”

Other motions taken up today included capital budget investments that will have a direct impact on increasing our rural healthcare workforce, addressing our backlog in special needs dentistry, and continuing to be a state leader in world-renowned blood research.

The Committee also took fiscally responsible votes that will ensure we use federal tax dollars before state tax dollars, spend one-time surplus cash instead of borrowing, and pay off state debt to realize future cost savings.

“We have a lot of federal funding and one-time surplus money that will not be generated on a year to year basis. Instead of using more of your state taxpayer

dollars, we're using almost \$1 billion in federal broadband funding first. Instead of borrowing at high rates for our state building projects, like the LeMay Forestry Center in Tomahawk, we're using cash. And instead of paying debt service on outstanding state loans, we're paying down our debt, which will show year-over-year cost savings."

The Joint Finance Committee will pick up again next week as we work to craft a responsible budget that's made for Wisconsin.