Sen. Hesselbein: Statement of Senate's budget action

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MADISON – State Senator Dianne Hesselbein (D-Middleton) released the following statement after the Wisconsin State Senate voted on the 2023-25 biennial budget:

"Today we voted on a budget crafted by Republicans to prioritize special interests and the wealthy, not working Wisconsin Families.

"During the committee process, Legislative Republicans made their priorities clear. They cut $32 million from the UW System, targeting Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives, and refused to fund the UW-Madison Engineering building project. They created a tax plan where the top 11 earners in Wisconsin will receive a $20 million tax cut. Instead of listening to the 70% of Wisconsinites who support Medicaid expansion, Republicans continued to reject funding that would provide health insurance to 90,000 more people in our state. At a time when mental health care is difficult to access for so many Wisconsinites, Republicans chose to reject $235 million for mental health initiatives in public schools. And with blatant disregard to the voices of parents and child care providers, they chose to allocate $0 for Child Care Counts. Without this vital program, childcares will need to raise rates or close and families will be forced to choose between working and staying home with kids.

"My Democratic colleagues and I introduced amendment after amendment to return the budget to what Governor Evers proposed. We pushed for strengthening our workforce, promoting public safety and stronger communities, giving public schools the resources they need to educate our children, accepting Medicaid expansion, and protecting our environment. Unfortunately every single one of these amendments failed on a party-line vote.

"The people of Wisconsin deserve better. They deserve a budget that puts their

needs first."