

Sen. Spreitzer: Statement on vote against Republican budget

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MADISON - Today, Senate Republicans passed their version of the 2023-2025 state budget. Governor Tony Evers proposed a state budget that would have invested in Wisconsinites, but Republicans rejected the Governor's common-sense plan and passed a budget that puts the priorities of the wealthy over the people of Wisconsin. Following the State Senate's vote to pass the state budget with bipartisan opposition, Sen. Mark Spreitzer (D-Beloit) released the following statement:

"Since we first learned that Wisconsin would have a historic \$7 billion budget surplus, constituents across my district began sharing their priorities with me and asking what the legislature planned to accomplish with the surplus money. Governor Evers and legislative Democrats listened and put forward budget ideas that balanced critical investments with a middle-class tax cut and saving more money in the rainy day fund.

"The top issue that constituents contacted me about over the past six months was addressing our state's child care crisis by extending the successful Child Care Counts program. This program gives funding to child care providers to maintain competitive wages for their staff without raising prices for parents. Without it, 25% of providers will close permanently and 60% of providers will be forced to raise tuition. I am incredibly disappointed that Republicans chose to end this program and make our child care crisis worse by instead choosing to fund a massive tax cut for millionaires.

"I supported Governor Evers's plan to use ongoing surplus money to address rising costs and other pressing needs for the people of Wisconsin - by investing in paid family leave, our local communities and public schools, our healthcare workforce

and family caregivers, our UW System, our family farmers, and our environment and clean water. I supported Governor Evers's plan to use one-time surplus money to invest in broadband expansion, roads and bridges, UW campus facilities, and economic development projects like the Janesville Woodman's Sports and Convention Center. I supported Governor Evers's plan for a targeted, 10% middle-class tax cut and additional tax credits for seniors and veterans.

"Instead of supporting these plans, and despite a \$7 billion surplus, Republicans slashed essential services across the board – including child care, broadband expansion, support for small businesses, and higher education – to fund a permanent tax cut for the wealthiest people in Wisconsin. In doing so, Republicans have created a tax plan that will blow a hole in every future state budget, and which will make it nearly impossible to come back and make investments in things like child care in the future.

"The Republican budget also continues to ignore common-sense priorities supported by the majority of Wisconsinites that don't even cost money, like universal background checks. They even neglected to include popular policies that bring in more money, such as expanding BadgerCare and legalizing marijuana.

"I wish that what was passed by Senate Republicans today was a budget for the people of Wisconsin, like the one that Governor Evers and legislative Democrats proposed. But it isn't. It's a broken budget based on broken priorities that are hurting our state. That is why I voted no. It is also why I will continue to fight for responsible middle-class tax relief while making investments in childcare, education, and our state's future."