

William Penterman: Budget wins and losses

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In late June, the Wisconsin State Legislature wrapped up the budget writing process. This was the first budget I voted on as the State Representative of the 37th District. I am proud of the budget that was passed by the Assembly and the State Senate, but I am also disappointed by the governor's vetoes.

I know the effects of inflation have hit working families hard. That's why I pushed for a record income tax cut that would benefit all Wisconsinites. The Republican-authored tax cut would have resulted in an average tax cut of \$573 per filer per year, totaling \$3.5 billion statewide. Unfortunately, the governor turned his back on working Wisconsinites when he vetoed the middle class tax cut. The governor vetoed the tax cut for individuals making more than \$27,630 and married couples making more than \$36,840.

Additionally, the governor went back on his word to "fix the damn roads" when he cut over \$10 million from the General Transportation Aid township funding from the budget passed by Republicans in the legislature. Towns such as Lebanon, Emmet, Lowell, Reeseville, Clyman, and Shields will all miss out on additional funding used to plow roads, salt icy highways, mow ditches to prevent deer crashes, patch potholes, and generally provide transportation safety.

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Despite these setbacks, the Republican-authored budget gives Wisconsinites much to celebrate. One of the biggest wins for Watertown I authored into the budget was \$2 million in funding for reconstructing the Main Street Bridge in downtown

Watertown. The current main street bridge is falling apart and is in desperate need of replacement. I am also pleased that the work on the new Main Street Bridge is scheduled to begin in the spring of next year.

My colleagues and I also invested \$525 million for housing initiatives to increase access and affordability of housing statewide. New initiatives include \$50 million for the Workforce Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program, \$275 million for the Residential Housing Infrastructure Revolving Loan Fund, and \$100 million for the Main Street Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Fund. My office will disseminate details on how to apply when information becomes available.

Most importantly, the budget passed by Republicans in the legislature is a balanced budget. We invested in key areas including education, roads, healthcare, housing, fire and EMS, and criminal justice. Overall, the budget is a win for Wisconsin!

-Penterman, R-Columbus, represents the 37th Assembly District.