



Earlier this week Governor Evers had his second budget address after a tumultuous 2020. Evers said we can't continue to operate the way they were before the pandemic, we need to use this time to really examine our policies so that all of Wisconsin will bounce back better than before. Our team watched the Governor's address together via zoom and we were encouraged to hear the Governor say we should be investing in people, not prisons. Hearing that brought back all of the work we have done with so many partner organizations to get to this point. Organizers and activists have been saying this for years and Evers listened. The budget will invest more in the UW System than the Department of Corrections by the end of the biennium.

This is particularly important considering the conversations we are having as a country about divesting from the tools of mass incarceration and investing into our communities and our futures. Communities of color have been struggling for years, and all we want to do is have a thriving community just like anyone else. Governor Evers acknowledged that we can be smart when it comes to safety without continuing to over police our communities.

We are also excited about investments in mental health, investments into childcare, and continuing to tackle environmental justice issues, especially as it relates to Black and Brown communities.

We know that this budget is just the first step, we know there's a lot more that needs to get done but this is a good first step. While encouraged that this is a starting point, we are not naive to the political landscape in the capital. We know in order for all of us to thrive we need to invest directly into our communities. We also know there are forces at the capital that would like nothing more than to prevent that for the people of color in this state. We know that the current legislature has never prioritized Black lives. We know that people create racial equity task forces, to shut us up without ever actually intending to help struggling communities. We challenge the legislature to for once prioritize Black and Brown lives in this state and work with Governor Evers on passing his budget and a budget that works for all Wisconsinites. Ball is in your court Republicans, will you pass a budget that helps communities of color?