



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Rep. Ohnstad, 608-266-0455

Budgeting for Our Future

MADISON – Today the Wisconsin Assembly debated and passed a modified version of the 2021-23 Budget Bill. Governor Evers introduced the bill in February, but it was heavily amended by the legislature’s Republican-controlled Joint Finance Committee. Representative Tod Ohnstad (D-Kenosha) did not support the final bill, which he believed should have made stronger investments in the needs of the state. The bill will now go to the State Senate for consideration tomorrow.

In response to these actions, Representative Ohnstad issued the following statement:

“While we have had some accomplishments in the past several months, it is disappointing that the budget before us leaves so much undone.

Perhaps the biggest disappointment was the failure to get more money in the classrooms for our schools in Kenosha and across the state. There is no greater investment than the investment in our children and our future – all made possible thanks to the leadership of President Biden and Governor Evers.

In our own backyard, the Kenosha Innovation Neighborhood proposed by Evers and Mayor Antaramian would have reinvigorated the 108 acres of the former Chrysler plant, but this bill deleted the needed \$10 million to create an innovation center and neighborhood that would connect industry, educators, and workers with incubator workspace in the heart of our city.

We could have increased the minimum wage for the first time in over a decade, provided the frontline staff who got us through the pandemic with worker protections, and fixed the problems with the unemployment program. We could have accepted over a billion dollars in federal healthcare funds and insured 90,000 more Wisconsinites. We could have joined so many other states in legalizing marijuana and appropriately recognizing and addressing climate change and the PFAS water contamination issue.

We are presented with a real opportunity as we work our way out of the crisis of a pandemic. While there may be some positive aspects to the bill, we could do more and we should do more. The budget falls short of what was possible. We could ensure we not only get “back to normal,” we could get back to better than ever.”

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65th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT