

Senators Demand Answers to Walker's \$1.8 Billion Budget Deficit

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The Legislative Fiscal Bureau (LFB) on Monday estimated the budget for state government will face a nearly \$1.8 billion shortfall for the next two-year budget.

MADISON - The expected shortfall for the next two-year state budget starting in July has risen to nearly \$1.8 billion, the non-partisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau reported Monday. The report paints a dire picture of Wisconsin's finances under the leadership of Governor Scott Walker.

These new budget numbers prove that Gov. Walker has not been honest with us.

Despite having had budget surplus that came at great expense to our public schools and local communities in the form of reductions to shared revenue and local road aids, and the thousands of Wisconsin residents who find themselves without health care, Walker's Administration has squandered that surplus leaving us with both an actual and structural deficit.

As noted in the LFB Memo, the \$115 million shortfall exceeds the 0.5% statutory trigger requiring action by the Secretary of the Department of the Administration and possibly the Governor and the Legislature. Unless corrective action is taken the structural deficit is likely to reach or exceed \$1 billion.

Because this budget deficit will have short-term and long-term implications on the residence of Wisconsin, on Monday four Wisconsin Senators, including our Dave Hansen (D-Green Bay), demanded in writing that Gov. Walker address this crisis and outline all the decisions he might

make that will impact Wisconsin families and communities.

The memo asks Walker: "Will our neighborhood schools take another funding hit? Will our streets be plowed so people can go to work? Will more students be denied financial aid to attend the UW or State technical College? These questions need to be answered sooner rather than later."

The Senator's memo went on to request "that you provide us with the specific actions you intend to take to resolve this fiscal crisis including but not limited to which programs you intend to cut, by how much, how your cuts will impact the services they receive from their government and when you intend to act?"

The memo concludes "There is no positive way to spin our state's perilous financial position. Despite the claims made by the Walker Administration and others a deficit that exceeds the trigger for emergency action and sets the stage for a billion plus structural deficit is not good news."

The Walker campaign continues to run glossy ads trumpeting the "success" of the Walker Administration and Walker himself continues to dodge responsibility for the crisis, saying that "increased revenue" could erase the deficit.



According to Senator Dave Hansen of Green Bay:

"With what seems like each passing day the economic news for Wisconsin under Governor Walker and the Republicans seems to get only worse:

- 37th in the nation for job creation.
- Last in the Midwest for job growth.

- \$281 million revenue shortfall.
- \$115 million budget deficit.

"And now this:

- **A nearly \$1.8 billion structural deficit.**

"When Governor Walker ran for Governor he promised to get rid of the structural deficit, balance the budget and create 250,000 jobs.

"Instead we got some of the biggest cuts to public schools in the entire country, deep cuts to our UW campuses and state technical colleges and cuts to local communities to help fund police and fire protection and repair local roads.

"In return Wisconsin's economy is failing and we're facing a nearly \$1.8 billion structural deficit that will cost the average family \$1,200 over the next two years. With this latest news from the non-partisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau the results are in: Governor Walker and the Republicans have not only broken their promises, they have failed Wisconsin."

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