

MADISON, WI - On Monday, Governor Scott Walker signed into law four higher education bills, Assembly Bills 740, 741, 742 and 744, calling the package 'college affordability bills' .

These Republican bills do nothing to address the burden of student debt and the people of Wisconsin shouldn't fall for the Republicans' lack of action with these modest election-year smoke and mirrors.

These anemic Republican bills do not provide a single ounce of relief for the roughly one million Wisconsinites burdened by the $19 billion student debt crisis. Republicans did not even pass the most significant of these weak bills which at least would have provided a tax break to a small percentage of those with significant debt.

Democrats provided Republicans ample opportunity to support our 'Higher Ed, Lower Debt' bill which is a real solution to providing relief to Wisconsinites with student loan debt. The Democratic proposal allows borrowers to refinance their loans, just like a car loan or mortgage. It is a common sense, popular plan that would grow Wisconsin's economy and unfortunately Republicans voted against this proposal several times this session.

Gov. Walker and Republicans also cannot hide from their record of gutting higher education in Wisconsin. Since they came into power, the UW System has lost $795 million in state aid* and the technical college system has lost $203 million in state aid.

(*excluding debt service. Source: Jan. 2016 Legislative Fiscal Bureau memo)