

Missed Opportunities Are Costing Wisconsin Billions

Written by Joint Finance Committee Democrats
Thursday, 03 June 2021 08:55

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This year, Republicans in Madison have cost our state \$1.6 billion by rejecting BadgerCare expansion and are gambling \$1.5 billion for our kids by failing to maintain the State's investment in public schools.

MADISON – As the Joint Finance Committee heads into another executive session today, Democrats on the committee are reminding Wisconsin families of the missed opportunities seen so far by the Republican-led committee and Legislature. Political grandstanding, failure to act promptly, and a lack of compliance to federal rules has lost Wisconsin billions already and could result in additional lost revenue going forward. Below is a statement from Democratic members of the Joint Finance Committee:



“While Governor Evers and legislative Democrats are working to ensure a strong economic recovery for Wisconsin by securing essential federal funds, Republican financial failures are putting those efforts in jeopardy. In a matter of weeks, Republicans cost our state \$1.6 billion

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by rejecting BadgerCare expansion and are gambling an additional \$1.5 billion for our kids by failing to maintain the State's investment in public schools. Families, schools, and small businesses depend on a responsible budget that invests in our priorities. Instead of rising to the moment, Republicans are falling back on their same old political games in our budget process."

In the past year, Republicans have "missed opportunities" for Wisconsin working families in the following ways:

- May 2020, Republicans lost out on \$25 million in federal funding to help unemployment benefits because they were too slow to act on the first COVID relief bill.
- Wisconsin almost lost \$70 million per month in federal FoodShare money because of a Republican lawsuit to strike down the Governor's health emergency order, only saved by quick action and negotiations by Governor Evers.
- Republicans have rejected \$1.6 billion in additional federal funding by refusing to expand BadgerCare.
- Wisconsin has lost a separate \$1.6 billion since 2013 by not expanding BadgerCare.
- Last week, Republicans underfunded the education budget so severely, Wisconsin may lose out on \$1.5 billion in federal aid for schools.

"Wisconsinites deserve better. There is still time for legislative Republicans to step up for Wisconsin workers, families, kids, and small businesses. Today, we have the opportunity to invest in safe and clean water, our agricultural communities, updating our unemployment system, and more. The question is, will Republicans move forward, or will they continue to double down on the missed opportunities of the last year?"