



DEMOCRATIC MEMBERS

JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Budget Bulletin: Transparency in State Investments

A Recap of Joint Finance Committee Action on the 2021-23 State Budget

MADISON – The Joint Finance Committee (JFC) continued to work through the budget process in an executive session on Tuesday, June 2, 2021. JFC took action on budget items for the Departments of Natural Resources, Workforce Development, Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protections and Safety and Professional Services. The Republican funding choices made on Tuesday failed to meet the needs of Wisconsin farmers, rural communities, and workers. In an effort to help keep Wisconsin citizens more informed, Democratic members on the committee provided the following recap of what happened in the budget hearing and how that impacts Wisconsin communities:

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)

Democrats on the committee offered [Motion #64](#) which included \$10 million for Food Security and Food Waste Reduction to ensure the food that we grow in Wisconsin ends up on the table and not in the landfill. The motion also included funding for the Meat Processor Grant (\$2 million) and Dairy Promotion & Processor Grants (\$2 million). The proposal included \$2.16 million for improving the exports of Wisconsin Agricultural Products, \$400,000 for the Something Special from Wisconsin program and \$200,000 for Farmer Mental Health Assistance program. An additional motion to legalize medicinal marijuana was rejected. The motion failed on party lines 4-12.

Republicans offered their own omnibus motion, [Motion #68](#), which included significantly less for Meat Processor Grants (\$400,000) and Dairy Processor Grants (\$400,000) and removed the Dairy Promotion Program. The motion also provided less for Farmers Mental Health Assistance program (\$100,000) and the Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports (\$1.16 million). The motion passed 12-4.

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) / Environmental Improvement Fund (EIF)

The DNR motion offered by Democrats, [Motion #70](#), which was based on the Governor's budget proposal would provide an increase to equip DNR wardens with a radio upgrade, body-worn cameras and Narcan. The motion would provide \$1 million for Deer Carcass Disposal Grants to help stop the spread of CWD and \$540,000 for a program to manage invasive species. Motion #70 would provide funding to ATV, UTV and Snowmobile to maintain and improve trails. The motion failed 4-11.

The other Democratic motion to EIF, [Motion #69](#), proposed \$40 million to address lead remediation in Wisconsin. The motion would create a program that authorizes DNR to award principal forgiveness for up to 50% of the cost of private lead service line replacement projects. Motion failed 4-12.

Republicans offered an omnibus motion including DNR and EIF. [Motion #71](#) would not fund either the Deer Carcass Grant or invasive species grant. This motion does not include any lead lateral remediation funding. Passed 12-4.

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Department of Workforce Development (DWD)

Democrats on the committee offered [Motion #67](#), which would fund several important programs offered by DWD. Among other minor program changes, the motion would create the Worker Connection Pilot Program and provide \$9.7 million to fund the program. Motion #67 provides \$8 million to provide grants to local workforce boards to fund pandemic recovery efforts, \$200,000 for health care job recruitment programs and \$1 million for green jobs training grants. The motion provides \$500,000 for youth and adult apprenticeship programs and \$15 million for UI general administration. This motion failed 4-12.

The GOP offered [Motion #72](#), which would modify the governor's proposal for the youth and adult apprenticeship programs, funding the program by transferring funds from the Early College Credit Program to DWD for the programs. The motion would also expand eligibility for youth summer jobs programs and provide \$25,000 to direct DWD to study a "sliding scale" UI system for the unemployment rate. The motion did not provide any GPR funding for training grants as the Democratic motion did. The motion passed 12-4.

Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS)

The JFC Democrats offered [Motion #60](#) which fund several positions that would add to staffing to DSPS to decrease wait times for licenses and improve services. The proposal provides funding to modernize IT for the Electronic Safety and Licensing Application (eSLA). The motion included changes to Private Wastewater Treatment System Grant Program (POWTS) including providing \$1.68 million in program revenue to reinstate the program and change the installation deadline to include systems that are at least 33 years old. This motion failed 4-12.

Republicans offered [Motion #62](#) which modified staffing to DSPS the motion would place funding for the eSLA in the JFC supplemental appropriation and did not reinstate the POWTS. The motion adjusted funding levels in the Democratic motion but was similar in programs acted on. The motion passed 12-4.

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