



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

JESSE JAMES

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Rep. James Legislative Update on the Budget

Rep. Jesse James (R-Altoona) released the following statement on the signing of the Wisconsin State Budget.

“Today, we had some victories. Governor Evers signed Assembly Bill 68 into law approving the efforts Republicans have made towards tax cuts, education funding, and so much more. However, this signing came along with 50 veto items.

But like I said, we had some victories today. This budget session, I was able to champion issues close to my heart: law enforcement and mental health. With this budget, there will be a total increase of \$4 million for law enforcement training, \$2 million in grant funding for the creation of critical incident mapping for schools and law enforcement, and an increase in the reimbursement rate for Medication Assisted Treatments to help reduce the overall cost of these treatments.

Additionally, Senator Kathy Bernier and I worked on mental health for our Chippewa Valley, which benefits the whole state. We worked to provide HSHS hospitals in Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls \$15 million in necessary funding to expand their psychiatric bed and behavioral health capacity. This grant will help 29 counties in the northwest Wisconsin region. Governor Evers issued a partial veto on this motion, but on a provision that he originally added in himself! I am thrilled that HSHS will receive the funds it needs to help improve the mental health resources in our region.

Unfortunately, not every effort was successful. I fought for the expansion of the mental health bed tracker in the state of Wisconsin that would have had the Department of Health Services be the data collection point. However the Governor vetoed this proposal because he believed this work to be burdensome on the Department of Health Services. Despite this roadblock, I will continue to fight to improve the infrastructure of our mental health services in this state.

The goal of this year’s budget was simple: look out for Wisconsinites. Republicans put in the work to make sure that more money will be staying in the pockets of the Wisconsin taxpayer, schools will be receiving more funding, and that our state remains safe and healthy! I am glad that Governor Evers decided to do what’s right in signing this budget.”

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