



John Nygren

WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE ★ 89TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Finance

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Finance Co-Chair Warns of Unsustainable Transportation Budget

Madison – On Tuesday, State Representative John Nygren (R-Marinette), Assembly Co-Chair of the budget-writing Joint Committee on Finance, released the following statement regarding the grim outlook of Wisconsin’s transportation budget:

“It’s no secret that something needs to be done to address our state’s transportation budget. This issue has gone unaddressed long enough; it’s time for the legislature to find and approve a sustainable solution to maintaining Wisconsin’s infrastructure.

“Data from the non-partisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau (LFB) shows that Wisconsin’s current transportation funding mechanism is neither sustainable nor effective. If we don’t address this funding problem, future generations will be forced to pay for high levels of bonding without a substantial benefit.

“In the 2015-17 State Budget, several transportation projects were delayed. Instead of updating and building upon our infrastructure, efforts were focused on maintaining existing roadways. Unfortunately, to cover these maintenance costs, Governor Walker advocated to use an unsustainably high amount of transportation bonding.

“According to LFB, we will need to recover over \$939 million just to maintain what was approved last budget. That figure doesn’t include debt service payments. Our state’s principal repayment currently stands at \$4.3 billion in bonding; a whopping \$3.5 billion of this repayment is owed by the transportation fund and the rest is set to come from the general fund. Moreover, some of the transportation bonds that were approved last budget have yet to be issued, which means Wisconsin’s debt service will only continue to rise.

“We have kicked the can down the road long enough. In the upcoming budget, we need to bring in new revenue that will help buy down our transportation debt and structure a sustainable plan for Wisconsin’s infrastructure. It’s imperative to look for reform and program savings as we continue discussing revenue options for the benefit of our state. Moving forward, I implore the governor to consider additional avenues of funding as well.

“Our state’s roadways are the lifeline to Wisconsin’s economy – businesses, tourism, education, and agriculture all rely on our infrastructure. It is for this reason that I am committed to finding a maintainable solution to the transportation fund as we move into the 2017-19 State Budget process.”



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Rep. Nygren will be holding a media availability via phone regarding this release tomorrow morning.

Wednesday, July 27, 2016

10:00-10:30am

Call-in information:

Phone Number: 1-877-402-9757

Access Code: 1599039#

Only credentialed members of the media are invited on the conference call.

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