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Foxconn Vote: It's Hard to be the Grown-Ups in the Room

MADISON, WI – State Representative David Crowley (D-Milwaukee) issued the following statement regarding his vote on Assembly Special Session Bill 1, relating to the authorization of an electronics and information technology manufacturing zone for Foxconn Technology Group.

“Today I voted against the Foxconn legislation because somebody has to be the grown-up in the room. This proposed deal is comparable to playing the lottery instead of investing in your retirement. It is as reckless and irresponsible to the long-term success of this state as when Governor Walker and the Republican Legislature gave the federal government back \$810 million in free money that would have created a transformational high-speed rail system.

“I represent the constituents of the 17th Assembly District, a majority of whom are African American. In Wisconsin, nearly 90% of all African Americans live in only six counties, all of which are located in the southeastern or southern part of the state. With unemployment of African Americans in Wisconsin at a staggering 11.1%, it was imperative to me that any deal of this magnitude being proposed included a massive improvement in Southeastern Wisconsin’s public transportation infrastructure. What is the benefit of creating these jobs in Southeastern Wisconsin if the largest population of unemployed and underemployed workers have no feasible way to get to these jobs?

“While the Assembly Substitute Amendment provides \$20 million to DWD that *could* be used to facilitate transportation to these jobs, this money is not guaranteed to go towards transportation and is only guaranteed for the next biennium. We need long-term transportation infrastructure to get our communities not only to Foxconn but to all the current and future jobs in the region. Spending \$20 million in the short-term to connect individuals to this one foreign business, while doing nothing to create public transportation infrastructure that could benefit everyone in the region, is fiscally irresponsible.

“My constituents should be afforded the ability to take advantage of these new job opportunities and this bill does nothing to increase job access for Milwaukee or the rest of Southeastern Wisconsin. While Wisconsin businesses are already facing worker shortages, bringing these jobs to the state and not properly ensuring that the citizens of the region are able to benefit is also fiscally irresponsible.

“I cannot in good conscious vote for legislation that could leave future generations still footing a bill for jobs a majority of our community could not benefit from. This deal will take away money from our schools, our infrastructure, and will create jobs that may not even exist at the time that Wisconsin taxpayers financially break even.”



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