



Veto the Budget

June 29, 2023

Dear Governor Evers,

We, the undersigned coalition, from Beloit to Milwaukee to Superior and dedicated to a Wisconsin where everyone can thrive, write to you with a shared sense of urgency around the state budget. As organizations that represent the concerns and aspirations of countless Wisconsinites, we implore you to use your veto power to defend the values and priorities of your constituents. While these values were the cornerstone of your original budget proposal, there needs to be more trace of them in the version now on your desk.

This budget raises significant concerns for our coalition. If you do not veto this budget, we fear that its shortcomings and inadequacies will be detrimental to the democratic values, education opportunities, and public resources that our state sorely needs. We implore you, please: don't give in. Fight like hell for our collective future.

We understand the political challenges you face and the constraints opposing forces impose. However, we hope you recognize the power of your position and the voice you carry on behalf of the people of Wisconsin. While we acknowledge the realities of political battles, we urge you to put up a fight and use your veto power, even in the face of opposition.

The budget proposal under consideration perpetuates a system that disproportionately affects communities of color and low-income individuals. If you do not veto this budget, it will deepen the divide between the haves and the have-nots, perpetuating systemic racism and economic inequality that undermine the fabric of our society.

Racial disparities are pervasive in our state, and this budget fails to address them adequately. You must reject any provisions perpetuating discriminatory practices, whether in education, healthcare, mental health care, criminal justice, or economic opportunity. We must prioritize targeted investments that address systemic racism and create opportunities for historically marginalized communities to thrive. Specifically, the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission should not lose its community enforcement powers to establish policy for the police department. This power has been fundamental

for community accountability and the passage of important protections that separate local enforcement from Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Public education is the key to a prosperous future for Wisconsin. It is imperative that the budget adequately invests in our public schools, UW universities and technical colleges, teachers, and students, and the current one does not. As the “public education” governor, we are counting on you to prioritize funding for quality public education, equitable resources, and comprehensive programs that support the academic and personal development of every child, regardless of their background or ZIP code.

Childcare is an essential component of a thriving society, supporting working families and promoting early childhood development. We urge you to veto any attempts to defund our childcare services altogether. Investing in childcare is investing in our future generations and the long-term success of our state.

Fair, progressive taxation is a Wisconsin value. This budget strips out the many tax exemptions you proposed and fails to provide meaningful benefits to working families since the lion’s share of the tax savings goes to the wealthiest Wisconsinites.

We believe in your capacity to make informed and judicious decisions that will benefit Wisconsin. By vetoing this budget, you have an opportunity to demonstrate your commitment to the well-being of our state and its citizens. If you refuse to veto this dangerous and harmful budget, it will leave a durable mark on your record. This decision will not only shape our present but also determine the path we tread in the years to come.

Signed,

African American Roundtable

All in Wisconsin

American Federation of Teachers - Wisconsin

Citizen Action of Wisconsin

Fair Wisconsin

Leaders Igniting Transformation

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin

Progress North

Voces de la Frontera

Wisconsin Alliance for Excellent Schools and the staff of Wisconsin Public Education Network

Wisconsin Democracy Campaign
Wisconsin Early Childhood Action Needed
Wisconsin Fair Maps Coalition
Wisconsin Family Child Care Association
Wisconsin Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals