

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 10, 2021

Senate Majority Leader Devin LeMahieu
Room 211 South
State Capitol
PO Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707

Assembly Speaker Robin Vos
Room 217 West
State Capitol
PO Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Senate Majority Leader LeMahieu and Speaker Vos:

We are deeply concerned that the fiscal years 2021-2023 biennial budget currently under consideration by the Joint Finance Committee will render Wisconsin ineligible for more than two billion dollars in federal funding for our K-12 schools. This funding is critical to allow our schools to safely reopen and to address the significant disruptions to learning caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the strongest possible terms, we urge you to pass a budget that maintains the state's historical investments in education, so that Wisconsin schools receive the relief they deserve.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress has authorized significant federal funding to help K-12 schools respond to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Most recently, the federal government made over \$1.5 billion available to Wisconsin schools through the American Rescue Plan. This funding is critical to help our schools recover from the pandemic and to ensure our students and teachers can safely return to in-person learning. To access these funds, states must meet a maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement to ensure that federal funds do not replace existing state investments in education, but rather meet the new education needs created by the pandemic.

Our state legislature must step up and ensure Wisconsin can take full advantage of these funds. The budget put forward by the Joint Finance Committee fails to make adequate investments in our K-12 schools and jeopardizes our state's ability to access the federal relief funding available to our state. By failing to set aside adequate funding for our schools, you are unnecessarily jeopardizing billions in federal relief available to Wisconsin.

Losing federal COVID relief funding will undoubtedly hurt school districts across rural, urban, and suburban areas as they are forced to absorb additional costs created by the pandemic. Ultimately, it will be our schoolchildren, teachers, principals, and parents who will lose after having worked so hard this past year despite the difficulties they faced. We must ensure that K-12 schools and universities have the tools, resources, and funding needed to safely reopen and meet the needs of every Wisconsin student.

Republicans in the state legislature are already poised to leave behind billions of federal dollars available to Wisconsin for Medicaid expansion. We urge you not to make the same mistake again. That is why we implore you revisit the proposed education budget and guarantee Wisconsin receives the federal funding it needs to ensure that every student has an opportunity to succeed.

This past year has been hard on Wisconsin families, let's not make the next two years harder than they need to be. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gwen Moore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tammy Baldwin". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized, with the first name being the most legible part.

Tammy Baldwin
Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ron Kind". The signature is cursive and written in a dark blue color.

Ron Kind
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Pocan". The signature is cursive and written in a dark blue color.

Mark Pocan
Member of Congress