

## **Press Statement**

**The primary responsibility of leadership in any organization or in our state is to provide a strong vision for the future. All stakeholders need to be involved in the process of shaping the vision whether it is for a school district or for the state of Wisconsin. Vision statements are impacted by the realities we currently face and those we anticipate facing in the near future. We are fortunate to live in a Republic where we elect individuals to represent the desires of their constituents. The Budget Hearings are the people's opportunity to let our representatives know our desires.**

**Governor Walker's budget proposal for funding public education was shaped by a vision he has for the growth of Wisconsin and for a well prepared work force. He did not come to this conclusion alone. He listened to stakeholders all across Wisconsin who reinforced time after time and meeting after meeting that the state needed to step up and fund public education. I urge the Joint Finance Committee to listen to the public outcry and support the governor's budget for public schools.**

**Our children are our legacy. If we do not take care of their needs the fate of our future will be in the hands of poorly prepared leaders. It is easy to think about tax dollars and how we spend them in ways that do not relate directly to the lives of citizens. But education dollars directly impact our children.**

**I have some concerns with the governor's proposal in linking the categorical aid to Act 10 and a 12% share of premium paid by employees. We have been very creative with our health insurance since Act 10 and in Berlin have had a 0% increase in premiums over the last 6 years. That has happened through creativity, co-pays, higher deductibles, and altered drug plans. So I would hope there would be more conversation about that requirement. I also hope you**

**would change the wording about the aid being assigned to a school based on the student count. Districts do not budget in that fashion.**

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