2019–21 State Budget Bill Summary

Governor Evers’ budget proposal has been introduced as companion bills, Senate Bill 59 and Assembly Bill 56, and referred to the Wisconsin Legislature’s Joint Committee on Finance (JCF). The JCF will conduct informational budget hearings, limited to testimony from state agency representatives, in early April. The JCF will also be holding public hearings on the budget in Janesville (April 5), Oak Creek (April 10), River Falls (April 15), and Green Bay (April 24). Information on times and locations is available through the Committee Schedule on the Legislature’s homepage, https://legis.wisconsin.gov/.

The WCC is monitoring several proposed items in the budget. The following lists some of these measures:

Criminal Justice
- Returns new 17-year-old offenders to juvenile court system beginning 2021.
- Expands the Opening Avenues to Reentry Success program to all 72 counties.
- Allocates $2 million over the biennium for the Treatment, Alternatives and Diversion (TAD) program.

Immigration
- Allows undocumented residents to obtain a noncompliant REAL ID driver’s license or identification card.
- Allows certain undocumented immigrant residents to obtain resident tuition within the University of Wisconsin and Wisconsin Technical College systems.

Health Care
- Expands Medicaid to cover low-income residents who earn up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level ($34,638 annually in 2019 for a family of four).
- Repeals recent Medicaid childless adult demonstration project changes.
- Provides $365 million to hospitals that serve Medicaid recipients.
- Increases Family Care program workforce funds by $29.6 million (state and federal).
- Provides $69 million to fund non-institutional mental health, behavioral health, and psychiatric services.
- Provides $28 million for the “Healthy Women, Healthy Babies” program.
- Repeals the prohibition on Title V, Title X, and Women’s Health block grant funding from being provided to an entity that provides abortion services or is affiliated with an organization that provides abortion services.
- Allows a health care professional to prescribe marijuana for certain medical conditions.

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Director's Corner
Kim Vercauteren, Executive Director

With the start of the legislative session comes the opportunity to discover areas of agreement. There are several bipartisan measures advancing through the Legislature that focus on positive legal changes which we all can support. An example is Assembly Bill 22 (Rep. Jeremy Thiesfeldt, R-Fond du Lac) and its companion, Senate Bill 25 (Sen. LaTonya Johnson, D-Milwaukee), which requires commercial motor vehicle driver education courses to include instruction on the recognition and prevention of human trafficking. As most human trafficking is dependent upon the movement of victims from place to place, training the professionals who traverse our roadways to spot trafficking as it occurs is an effective way to protect the dignity of a vulnerable and difficult-to-access population. The WCC joined with numerous other groups in supporting this legislation, which has no registered opposition.

Another bipartisan measure that faces no opposition is Assembly Bill 33 (Rep. David Steffen, R-Green Bay) and Senate Bill 39 (Sen. Alberta Darling, R-River Hills). Under current Wisconsin law, the opportunity to expunge a criminal conviction, even for a minor offense, is very limited. It can only be sought for a crime committed before the age of 25, if the person has no prior felony convictions, and if the crime in question is not a violent felony offense. Also, the court must order a record expunged at sentencing, before a person’s sentence is complete. If completed, the record is expunged as ordered. Individuals who commit an offense later in life, or who seek to clean up their record after months, years, or decades of law–abiding behavior, have no recourse.

Under AB 33/SB 39, a person of any age who would otherwise be eligible under current law for expungement may request to have their offense removed from their record. Also, in addition to allowing an order to be entered at the time of sentencing, a person may file a petition for expungement with the court after his or her sentence is complete.

The state budget proposal features a number of items that also promote dignity and the common good, such as returning 17-year-old offenders to the juvenile court system, measures to combat homelessness, and allowing working families keep more earnings through the Earned Income Tax Credit. As the means through which our state sets its fiscal priorities for the next two years, let’s continue to focus on and work for what we can all agree is the “common good.”

State Budget, Continued from page 1

Poverty
• Increases funding for homeless prevention programs.
• Eliminates drug testing requirements for state benefit programs.
• Increases the Wisconsin Earned Income Tax Credit for working families with one or two children.
• Restores indexing for the Homestead Credit and increases the maximum eligible household income.
• Creates a new nonrefundable child and dependent care credit, beginning in tax year 2020.
• Increases County and Municipal Aids by 2 percent starting in FY 20.
• Increases funding for Children and Family Aids by $15 million in FY 20.
• Increases foster care and Wisconsin Shares child care program provider rates.
• Provides $1 million in federal funding in FY 20 to expand the Transitional Jobs program.
• Increases the hourly minimum wage to $8.25 in 2020 and $9 in 2021.

Education
• Implements the Fair Funding Formula and allows schools/districts with full-day 4-year-old kindergarteners to count them as full-day students.
• Restores the two-thirds state funding commitment for public school revenues.
• Reimburses 30 percent of special education costs in FY19 and 60 percent in FY20, and provides $7 million in transition readiness grants.
• Fully funds reimbursements under the school breakfast and school day milk programs.
• Freezes parental choice program enrollments and implements changes to discourage program support and participation.
• Prohibits new students from participating in the Special Need Scholarship Program.
• Eliminates private school tuition tax deduction.

Agriculture and Environment
• Allocates $200,000 to provide mental health support and assistance to farmers.
• Advances several initiatives to improve water quality, including an additional $800,000 annually to the well compensation grant program.

Transportation
• Increases Elderly and Disabled Transportation Aids by $6 million over the biennium.
On Tuesday, April 30, 2019, Catholics from around the state will meet at the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center in Madison, Wisconsin, for **Catholics at the Capitol 2019**. Sponsored by the Wisconsin Catholic Conference (WCC) in cooperation with other Catholic organizations, this biennial event is a day of prayer, formation, and advocacy.

“This year’s event is special in that it marks the 50th anniversary of the WCC,” said WCC Executive Director Kim Vercauteren. “Founded in 1969, the WCC was one of several bishops’ conferences created following the Second Vatican Council. Both the advocacy and issues advanced by the WCC were limited then. Fifty years later, however, we advocate on a broad range of issues that touch on human life and dignity. With **Catholics at the Capitol 2019**, we aim to highlight the contributions of younger Catholics who will lead us into the next 50 years.”

The day begins with registration and continental breakfast, followed by a morning general session. The general session features a keynote address by Vincent Noth and Samantha Vosters of Milwaukee’s Riverwest Food Pantry. The two will reflect on the pantry’s mission to be a community of generosity that includes a mission house, daily prayer, corporal works of mercy, and attention to the structural causes of poverty.

Vincent Noth is a Milwaukee native, who grew up in public school on the northside of Milwaukee. He has been the Executive Director of the Riverwest Food Pantry since 2013. Vincent has worked in Milwaukee’s urban service and nonprofit sector since 1999, as the Director of Programs for Summit Educational Association and in the Youth and Family Ministries for Eastbrook. He served as a community and organization development consultant with the Peace Corps in Eastern Europe. He holds a B.F.A. from Carnegie Mellon University and a M.A. in Religion from Trinity International University. Vincent and his wife Jessica have lived in the Riverwest-Harambee community since 2001.

Samantha Vosters is from the small farm town of Freedom, Wisconsin. She has been the Director of Team Form since 2014, and helped found the Mission Internship program. She graduated in 2010 from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota, with a degree in Catholic Studies and Psychology. She has worked with various ministries, including Catholic Youth Expeditions (CYE), a Catholic apostolate for high school students and young adults in the Diocese of Green Bay, as well as evangelization and ministry among the materially poor with LAMP Catholic Ministries in the Bronx. Since 2014, Samantha has committed her life to live single for the Lord through a vow of chastity. She lives in and oversees the Mission House for women in Riverwest.

After the general session, participants will select one of five breakout sessions to attend. These sessions focus on various aspects of Church social teaching, including homelessness, immigration, pro-life health care, and criminal justice. Back by popular demand is an introduction to Catholic social teaching for those interested in gaining a better understanding of the principles that guide Catholic public policy engagement.

Registration begins at 8:30 am and the morning general session will start at 9:30 am. Following lunch, participants will travel to the State Capitol for an anniversary presentation and prayer service. All are encouraged to visit with their legislators at the Capitol until 2:00 pm, when the day’s events will conclude.

The advance registration deadline is Monday, April 22, 2019, with a cost of $40 for non-students and $12 for full-time students. After April 22, registration is $50 for non-students (see the registration form insert in this **Capitol Report** issue). For more information, visit [www.wisconsincatholic.org](http://www.wisconsincatholic.org), email office@wisconsincatholic.org, or call the WCC at 608-257-0004. Details on how to arrange meetings with legislators, as well as other important information, will be provided in the registration confirmation packet. Please join the Catholic bishops of Wisconsin for **Catholics at the Capitol 2019**!
Wisconsin Legislature Starts New Session

The 104th State Legislature was inaugurated on January 7, 2019. The Republicans retained majorities in both houses, with 19 Republicans and 14 Democrats in the Senate and 63 Republicans, 35 Democrats, and one vacant seat in the Assembly (District 64). Eighteen members are new:

- CABRERA, Marisabel (D-9)
- DITTRICH, Barbara (R-38)
- EMERSON, Jodi (D-91)
- GRUSZYNISKI, Stausch (D-90)
- GUNDRUM, Rick (R-58)
- HAYWOOD, Kalan (D-16)
- JAMES, Jesse (R-68)
- KURTZ, Tony (R-50)
- MAGNAFICI, Gae (R-28)
- MYERS, LaKeshia (D-12)
- NEUBAUER, Greta (D-66)
- OLDENBURG, Loren (R-96)
- PLUMER, Jon (R-42)
- RAMTHUN, Timothy (R-59)
- SORTWELL, Shae (R-2)
- STUBBS, Shelia (D-77)
- VINING, Robyn (D-14)
- WITTK, Robert (R-62)

In the Senate, four members are new:

- BERNIER, Kathy (R-23)
- JACQUE, André (R-1)
- SMITH, Jeff (D-31)
- SCHACHTNER, Patty (D-10)

The Legislature’s early work is the 2019-20 state budget bill. Governor Evers’s proposed budget will first be reviewed by the Joint Committee on Finance, after which it will go to each house for deliberation and passage. Once amended by the Legislature, the budget will return to the Governor for his signature, who may veto parts of the bill prior to signing it.
**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**WHO SHOULD ATTEND:** All those interested in learning more about Catholic social teaching and how to advocate effectively.

**COST:**
- $40/adult advance registration
- $12/student (secondary, full-time post-secondary, advance or same-day)
- $50/adult same-day registration (check/cash only—no credit/debit charge)

*Includes continental breakfast and lunch*

**ADVANCE REGISTRATION DEADLINE:**
Monday, April 22, 2019

**REFUND POLICY:** Refunds will only be available to those cancelling registration prior to April 24, 2019, including if due to inclement weather.

**PARKING:** The Monona Terrace Parking Ramp is open to the public and costs $3 per hour with a $16 a day maximum until 5 pm (payment by cash, Visa, or MasterCard). Entrances to the ramp are located on W. Wilson St., just south of Carroll St., or off John Nolen Dr. Parking stalls for individuals with disabilities are available on the top ramp and in front of the Level Three entrance.

**TRANSPORTATION:** The Capitol Building is located two blocks from the Monona Terrace. Those who need assistance traveling to the Capitol should request accommodation in advance (see reverse).

Certain dioceses are arranging for transportation. Please contact your diocesan office for social concerns or justice for more information. For registration and information on the Archdiocesan bus ($20), visit archmil.regfox.com/bus-at-catholics-at-capitol-april-30-2019 or contact 414-758-2286.

**HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS:**
Please make arrangements for accommodations directly with the hotel.
- **Hilton Madison Monona Terrace** (connected to site) [www.hiltonmadison.com](http://www.hiltonmadison.com), 1-800-445-8667
- **Best Western Premier Park Hotel** (2 blocks from site) [www.parkhotelmadison.com](http://www.parkhotelmadison.com), 1-800-780-7734

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Keynote address by Vincent Noth and Samantha Vosters
Executive Director and Team Form Director of the Riverwest Food Pantry

[www.wisconsincatholic.org](http://www.wisconsincatholic.org)
8:30 am  Registration with Continental Breakfast
9:30 am  Morning General Session: Opening Remarks
9:40 am  Keynote Address  Communities of Generosity: Food, Faith & Fellowship: The mission of Riverwest Food Pantry in Milwaukee is not only to relieve hunger, but also to create a community where everyone gives and everyone receives. Learn how a Catholic intentional “community of generosity” combines a mission house, daily prayer, corporal works of mercy, and attention to the structural causes of poverty.
Executive Director Vincent Noth & Team Form Director Samantha Vosters, Riverwest Food Pantry, Milwaukee
10:20 am  BREAK
10:30 am  Breakout Sessions
1. Solutions to Homelessness: Examine two Catholic Charities models for helping the homeless in Madison and Wausau.
2. Latino Ministry and Services: Learn about the needs and the gifts of the Latino community.
3. Innovations in Pro-Life Health Care: Learn about new models of Catholic health care that serve the most vulnerable.
4. Prison Ministry and Re-Entry: Learn insights gained from prison ministry and how employers benefit when they hire returning citizens.
5. Introduction to Catholic Social Teaching: Review the principles that are the basis for the Church’s public policy advocacy.
11:15 am  BREAK
11:30 am  Luncheon & Legislative Review
12:15 pm  Travel to the State Capitol Building
12:30 pm  Capitol Presentation and Prayer Service
1:00 pm  Legislative Visits
2:00 pm  Closing Prayer and Adjourn

CONFIRMATION OF REGISTRATION: Once your registration is received, a confirmation will be sent to you, including a map, parking information, and instructions for those who wish to coordinate meetings with their legislators. Attendees are encouraged to set up appointments with legislators in advance of the day. Please contact the WCC for assistance, or visit www.wisconsincatholic.org for more information and updates on the day’s events.

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: APRIL 22, 2019
Registration is also available online, http://www.wisconsincatholic.org/

Please make check payable to: Wisconsin Catholic Conference, 131 W. Wilson St., Suite 1105, Madison, WI, 53703
NAME: __________________________  DIOCESE: __________________________
ADDRESS: __________________________  (Street) __________________________  (City) __________________________  (Zip) __________________________
PHONE: __________________________  EMAIL: __________________________
BREAKOUT SESSION PREFERENCE: Session #________

Please identify special needs:
☐ I have a disability accommodation need. Please contact me.
Please describe: __________________________
☐ I have dietary restrictions. (Some requirements may incur an additional fee.)
Please describe: __________________________

ADVANCE REGISTRATION FEES
REGISTRATION DEADLINE: APRIL 22, 2019
Individual ☐ $40
Student (full-time) ☐ $12
Only cash or check accepted via mail.
TOTAL Enclosed $________