

Advocacy Resources for the 2023 – 2025 Biennial Budget

March 2023

How to Share your Priorities for the State Budget

The Joint Finance Committee is holding 4 public hearings on the state budget in April. The hearings are a great opportunity for you to share with legislators the programs and services that are important to you and your family.

Hearing location and dates are:

- Waukesha - April 5
- Eau Claire - April 11
- Wisconsin Dells - April 12
- Minocqua - April 26
- See also *Notice for the Budget Hearings*:

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/raw/cid/1714350>

Options for sharing your priorities with legislators

Attend a Joint Finance Committee Public Hearing and register to speak to the committee. See our *Tips for JFC Hearings*.

Can't attend a JFC Public Hearing? You still have options:

- **Submit written comments:**
 - **Email:** budgetcomments@legis.wisconsin.gov
 - **U.S. mail to:**
Joe Malkasian, Room 305 East, State Capitol, Madison, WI 53702
 - **Post in the Public Comment Form on JFC website:**
<https://legis.wisconsin.gov/topics/budgetcomments/>
- **Email your state legislators.**
- **Attend a public hearing hosted by your state legislator(s).**
 - Most legislators hold a listening session in their district.
 - To see who represents you in the Legislature, go the State Legislature Home Page. Enter your address in the "Who Are My Legislators?" field:
<https://legis.wisconsin.gov/>

Tips for Speaking at a Joint Finance Committee Hearing

- **Plan ahead.** Details for each site are posted on the JFC Budget Public Comment page: legis.wisconsin.gov/topics/budgetcomments/
 - Arrange for transportation
 - Request accommodations if needed, ASAP.
Contact Becky Hannah, Legislative Fiscal Bureau,
Phone: 608-266-3847 Email: Fiscal.Bureau@legis.wisconsin.gov
 - DRW is staffing a table at each hearing to support people with disabilities.
 - Consider bringing a lunch and something to drink. It's a long day!
- **Arrive early.** The hearing begins at 10 AM but there will be a long line of people who arrive early and are waiting to speak. Each hearing runs from 10 AM – 5 PM, sometimes later.
- **Fill out a registration slip** as soon as they are available and hand it in. Speaker order is usually determined by the order in which you register.
- **Key points to cover** in your comments:
 - Your name, where you live, and your job if relevant
 - Introduce your issue and how it impacts you or your family. Include a story or example.
 - Make your ask – share the budget proposals that matter to you and why. And be sure to say thank you!
 - Write down what you want to say and bring it with you.
- **A catchy theme or slogan** can help “brand” your comments. Ex. “There’s no place like home”, “People can’t wait” and “Keep the community promise.” Sometimes advocates will team up and each wear a button or t-shirt with their message.
- **Practice!** Each speaker gets about three minutes to speak. Three minutes goes by quickly!
- **Email** your comments to the Joint Finance Committee and to your state legislators, as well speaking at the hearing.