

## Your Views: Preservation tax credit helps reuse old buildings

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A provision in Gov. Scott Walker's proposed budget to cap Wisconsin's highly successful historic preservation tax credit program would cripple a vital redevelopment tool turning around communities across the state.

At the same time the state credit is threatened in Madison, some in Congress are considering ending the federal version of the tax credit, which has also been a boon to jobs and revitalization across Wisconsin.

In Rock and Walworth counties, renovations have been made possible in places such as Beloit, Whitewater and in my hometown of Evansville, where six projects relied on the credits.

One of those projects was the \$2.3 million renovation of the 1904 Eager Economy Building. Thanks to the credits, I was able to restore this once near-empty and crumbling landmark and make it home to nine businesses and eight apartments. Importantly, renovation helped kick off other restorations in our historic downtown, some of which were made possible by the credits.

Historic buildings in Evansville are paying levels of taxes to the state that wouldn't be possible if the buildings hadn't been restored. Studies show the state's historic tax credits pay for themselves over seven years.

Capping this successful program will prevent needed redevelopment and job creation across Wisconsin. It will also make it hard to preserve our past for generations to come. I urge legislators around Wisconsin to remove this harmful idea from the state budget and ask that our congressman fight to keep this important credit in place at the federal level.

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