Sen. Shilling: Wisconsin wages stuck in the past

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Anniversary of minimum wage increase highlights need for progress

MADISON – Despite Wisconsin being one of the first states to pass a statewide minimum wage standard, nearly a decade has passed since the last time the minimum wage was increased in July 2009. While states like Minnesota have taken steps to improve wage growth and prosperity by raising their minimum wage, expanding worker training and investing in community development, Wisconsin Republicans cut worker wages, increased health care costs and prioritized tax giveaways to the wealthiest 1% in the state.

"Wisconsin families are working harder than ever but can't seem to get ahead because Republican policies continue to cut worker wages, attack worker rights and reward corporations that outsource jobs," said Senate Democratic Leader Jennifer Shilling (D-La Crosse). "We're falling further behind states like Minnesota that are investing in education, expanding access to affordable health care and raising their wages to encourage economic growth. We may have the better football team, but Minnesota is outperforming Wisconsin in terms of job creation, wage growth and economic opportunities."

According to the Economic Policy Institute, median real hourly wages have gone up 2.4% in Minnesota, compared to 0.3% in Wisconsin. Additionally, Minnesota has had stronger overall economic growth, stronger growth per worker and stronger

population growth than Wisconsin since 2010. Wisconsin Democrats have prioritized legislation to stop corporate outsourcing, raise wages, promote Wisconsin-made products and give local businesses the first crack at state contracts.