

# With divided government, Shilling hopes Capitol won't 'grind to a halt'

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Senate Minority Leader Jennifer Shilling says legislative Dems and Republicans are facing an “arranged” marriage in the upcoming session.

Republicans, who will still control both houses of the Legislature, will ultimately need sign off from Dem Gov.-elect Tony Evers to pass their agenda. Dems, meanwhile, will need GOP support to get their bills scheduled for hearings and through the Legislature.

And to repair the frayed relationships inside the Capitol, lawmakers of both parties could use a basic issue to work together on early next year.

She's just not sure what that issue will be. The two sides are sure to tackle big topics, such as transportation, which could provide common ground.

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Shilling told WisPolitics.com in a new interview she sees Republicans going through the five stages of grief after Evers beat Gov. Scott Walker last month. And she's not sure if they're fully prepared for what life is like in the Capitol with a gov of the other party.

Next session, only nine GOP members of the Assembly and seven of the Senate will have served in the Legislature when Dem Gov. Jim Doyle was still in the East Wing.

“They are going to find a whole new world that they're about to be a part of,” Shilling said.

And she suggested what she's seen from Republicans over the last eight years may not be a good sign of how things will run with split government.

“I hope that this place doesn’t grind to a halt in gridlock. But you know what? The Republicans weren’t so great when they had control of everything, and they had their own internal dynamics of dysfunction,” Shilling said, noting the 2017-19 budget was nearly three months late.

Shilling ripped the GOP extraordinary session bills and has urged Walker to veto them. The legislation covers a host of issues from early voting to who appoints the Wisconsin Economic Development Corp. CEO.

Still, Shilling sees one issue underlying the various changes Republicans proposed to the Department of Justice — redistricting.

She suspects the driving reason behind GOP lawmakers looking to create an ability to hire private attorneys on their own is that they will disagree with incoming Dem AG Josh Kaul in any lawsuit over the next maps and want their own say in court.

Shilling said Republicans were trying to set up a “legislative litigation department” that will have no caps on the legal bills private attorneys submit to the state and no transparency.

“I’ve been around here a long time,” said Shilling, who was elected to the Assembly in 2000 and the Senate in a 2011 recall election. “The big prize is redistricting once every 10 years. If you’re the party in power, you fight to keep it. If you’re the party not in power, you fight to get into power.”

See more from the interview in the Wednesday [PM Update](#).

Listen to the full interview:

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