

Rep. Rodriguez: Assembly GOP proposes package of bills to fight homelessness

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MILWAUKEE - State Representative Jessie Rodriguez, R- Oak Creek, unveiled legislation that aims to curb homelessness through workforce development efforts, at a news conference with fellow lawmakers on Thursday. The legislation is part of a broader package of bills introduced by Assembly Republicans at several statewide press conferences.

“In 2017, Assembly Republicans brought forward a package of proposals to address homelessness, an issue that had largely been ignored over the previous decade,” said Rodriguez. “Today we have once again stepped up to the plate with these proposals. This legislation is the next step in the conversation to end homelessness in Wisconsin.”

Rodriguez’s proposal directs the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development to identify and create programs aimed at helping homeless youth and adults emphasizing the specific needs of those demographics. The bill also requires collaboration with local workforce development boards and their corresponding homeless response systems.

“We know that when someone is able to find meaningful employment they are significantly less likely to be homeless,” said Rodriguez. “We feel this particular initiative is an important piece of the overarching package to end homelessness in

Wisconsin.”

Last session, the Assembly GOP package included creating the Interagency Council on Homelessness, chaired by former Lt. Gov. Rebecca Kleefisch. The group included agency heads in addition to service providers and advocates from the homeless community.

The council released a comprehensive action plan last fall titled, A Hand and a Home: Foundations for Success. The GOP plan, includes eight proposals based on priorities from the council’s report.

“This package of bills we are proposing today will have a cumulative investment of \$3.75 million in new funding, more than doubling the state’s current commitment,” said Rodriguez. Each proposal addresses a specific need and ensures a targeted investment in programs that address homelessness statewide.

“Last session, the proposals we brought forward passed with bipartisan support in both the Assembly and the Senate. I’m hopeful Gov. Evers will follow through on his commitment to bipartisanship and work with Republicans to get these proposals signed into law.”