

Rep. Dittrich: Joins colleagues calling on DWD to expedite processing unemployment insurance claims

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Oconomowoc – Representative Barbara Dittrich (*R-Oconomowoc*), vice chair of the Assembly Committee on Workforce Development, joined with colleagues including Rep. Nygren, co-chair of the Joint Committee on Finance in calling for the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) to explore all options in order to process unemployment insurance claims in a timelier manner, including an expedited process during this time of closures resulting from the COVID-19 outbreak.

“We are receiving a disproportionate number of contacts from constituents reaching a desperation point because their unemployment claim has not been processed for weeks,” Rep. Dittrich stated. “I, like several of my colleagues, believe that DWD could be using an expedited process much like Medicaid to help our most vulnerable citizens at this time. Like Medicaid, those pending claims which have a high likelihood of approval could be subject to a pre-approval process that would get much-needed income into the hands of people more rapidly.”

DWD is eligible for \$18.9 million in federal aid to assist with administrative costs involved in processing the unprecedented influx of unemployment claims. State legislation signed into law by Governor Evers last month could also assist with moving more help into the department.

Rep. Dittrich further remarked, “While I appreciate the hard work of Secretary Frostman and his dedicated staff, I am at a loss as to why more state workers have not yet been shifted over to give them the additional help they currently need. Between availing themselves of this tool given through last month’s relief bill and

formulating a pre-approval process, I think most of the large challenges we are seeing with delayed claims could be resolved. I hope this will be addressed in short order so Wisconsinites are not needlessly suffering as they wait for help.”