

Sen. Erpenbach: Federal and state action needed on COVID relief for Wisconsin

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(MADISON) State Senator Jon Erpenbach (D-West Point) confirmed in a new memo from the Wisconsin Legislative Council that any federal dollars the state of Wisconsin received to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic will expire on December 30, 2020.

“The situation in Wisconsin is dire. Our hospitals are at capacity, our medical workforce is strained, small businesses are suffering and need our help, said Erpenbach. COVID-19 isn’t going away on December 30th and we need to be able to respond.”

According to the memo, barring any new federal legislation addressing the issue, costs for expenditures using Corona Virus Relief funds must be incurred by the end of the day on December 30, 2020. After that any remaining money must be returned to the federal government. We do not have the ability to put the money into a fund to spend later and there is no provision to ask for an extension.

Wisconsin is on pace to spend all federal dollars it has received from the Coronavirus Relief Fund, without federal assistance in the form of another relief package, we will have to spend state dollars to fund any program that will help combat the pandemic.

“There isn’t a person in Wisconsin that hasn’t been impacted by COVID. Our friends in the GOP here in Wisconsin need to recognize that and step up to the plate and get our state ready to have the kinds of programs in place to assist those who need it most-our hospitals and clinics, child care centers, schools, small businesses and our local governments and public health departments,” said Erpenbach.

“We’ve given them over 7 months to come up with a plan and all they have given us are empty promises of bipartisanship, broad support for doing nothing from Republicans in the Senate and from Speaker Vos we get a plan that will actually

increase division in our communities, increase the spread of Covid-19, and put politicians in charge of decisions that should be left to public health experts. Meanwhile, Wisconsinites face eviction, food insecurity, job loss and a medical system that is completely overwhelmed. We need new funds from Congress and we need a plan to bring Wisconsin back stronger than ever,” added Erpenbach.