

Sen. Kapenga: to Introduce legislation to expand unemployment call center hours

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Madison, WI — Senator Chris Kapenga (R-Delafield) released the following statement in response to the continued failure of Gov. Evers' administration to handle the ongoing backlog of unemployment claims, and the plan by Assembly Republicans to offer forgivable loans to those waiting to receive benefits.

"I appreciate the initiative my Assembly colleagues took with their plan to assist those who have been waiting months for their unemployment benefits. However, we shouldn't need to create a new program to fix the problems of an ineffective administration. It is incumbent upon Governor Evers and his team to fix these ongoing problems with our state unemployment program. I continue to hear on a daily basis from constituents who cannot pay their rent or mortgage and are receiving eviction or foreclosure notices.

For months, Governor Evers and Secretary Frostman have had the ability to transfer staff from other state agencies and redirect federal CARES Act funding towards fixing this problem. Yet, nearly four months later, people continue to wait for weeks on end and still cannot get in touch with anyone at the department.

That is why in the coming days, I plan to introduce legislation that would require the Department of Workforce Development to expand call center hours to seven days a week until claims have caught up. This is the least the agency can do to ensure people get the help that they need during these difficult times."