Sen. Shilling: Senate Democrats push for stronger COVID-19 response

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MADISON, WI – As states across the country continue to grapple with the rapid spread of COVID-19, Governor Evers has taken swift and pragmatic action to protect Wisconsin families, seniors and communities. Despite the Governor declaring a public health emergency on March 12th it has taken Republican legislators more than a month to take critical steps needed to deal with the pandemic head on. After weeks of inaction from the Republican majority, the Wisconsin State Senate passed the first COVID-19 response bill.

"This public health crisis is stressful for families and is impacting every facet of our lives," said Senate Democratic Leader Jennifer Shilling (D-La Crosse). "While this legislation is a starting point and a step in the right direction, there is still more work that needs to be done. Action should have been taken weeks ago and this is by no means the only support the legislature can offer. It is time the legislature come to grips with the severity of this virus and help the businesses, families and communities with the long-term ripple effects that COVID-19 will have on our state. Democrats and Gov. Evers want to focus on a comprehensive approach to the health, economic and workforce challenges facing our state. Wisconsinites are resilient, and together we will get through this and move forward."

Democrats are supportive of efforts included in the bill to ensure more federal health dollars and temporarily suspend the one week waiting period for unemployment insurance. Senate Democrats introduced an amendment that would invest more into business grants, increase coverage for COVID-19 testing, increase coverage for telehealth services and fully repeal the one week waiting period for unemployment insurance. The amendment was rejected on a party line vote with all

Republicans voting against.

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