

Sen. Smith: Republicans' proposal is a recipe for disaster

Posted on Wednesday, Dec 2, 2020

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

MADISON - After eight months of inaction, Wisconsin Assembly Republicans introduced a hodgepodge of proposals for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Assembly and Senate Republicans continue to disagree about how to move forward while ignoring science-driven solutions. The latest proposal requires teachers to do in-person instruction; limits the authority of Wisconsin's local public health departments; and imposes hurdles for distributing COVID-19 vaccines and additional federal relief.

The Legislature passed the bipartisan COVID-19 relief bill in April. Since then, Republican leaders refused to meet again, despite their continued assurance more support would be coming. During the same period of time, Democrats introduced multiple relief measures to streamline the Unemployment Insurance system and support our schools. Governor Tony Evers (D) also introduced three legislative packages during this crisis. Republicans refused to call an extraordinary session and ignored repeated calls to act on any of the plans offered.

Senator Jeff Smith (D-Brunswick) offered the following statement:

"These harmful proposals are disguised as a way to help Wisconsin, but it's more like a recipe for disaster. The same day Wisconsin sets a new record for COVID-19-related deaths, Republicans bizarrely offer political maneuvers that put essential workers, kids and state employees at risk instead of listening to public health officials.

“Republicans have failed on all fronts to provide meaningful relief for Wisconsinites in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since day one, Republicans were more interested in politics than public health. It’s clear today, Republicans still don’t have a plan to help our state recover. To make matters worse, Republicans are now proposing ideas that impede our ability to overcome this crisis. Republicans have bungled this crisis from the start, we simply cannot allow them to screw up vaccine distribution too.

“Republicans’ ineptitude this past year is yet another clear example of why Wisconsin needs to pass non-partisan redistricting reform immediately. If a global pandemic doesn’t get them to listen, what will? Wisconsin deserves better leadership and it won’t happen until the legislative districts reflect the will of the people.”