

# 50 Wisconsin chambers of commerce, GOP congressional delegation call for ending 300 federal unemployment benefit

Posted on Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Fifty chambers of commerce statewide are urging lawmakers to end the \$300 federal unemployment benefit, arguing it contributes to the state's workforce shortage.

This comes on the heels of Wisconsin's Republican congressional delegation also urging Gov. Tony Evers to end the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation.

Workforce was already the biggest challenge facing Wisconsin businesses prior to the COVID-19 downturn, the chambers wrote. And instead of a bounce back from the pandemic, the state's economy is being held back by an "acute labor shortage" made worse by the benefits they say incentivize people to stay home.

The chambers, including Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce, are asking Evers and the Legislature to instead use American Rescue Plan funds to encourage people to reenter the workforce.

**>> 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.](#)**

"Wisconsin should join states like Idaho, Iowa, Montana, and South Carolina in ending the \$300 per week federal UI supplemental," the letter reads. "Instead, funds from the American Rescue Plan should be used to incentivize work by offering bonuses, similar to what is being done in the aforementioned states."

It also calls for the state to reinstate the talent attraction campaign to recruit workers to the state.

In the Republicans' letter to Evers, the delegation writes that the primary issue Wisconsin employers face is their inability to hire the workers they need to meet demand as the economy reopens.

"We are paying people not to work, so employers cannot hire the people they need to run their manufacturing plants or be in the service industry," said U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh. "We need to get government out of the way, and let people start living productive lives again."

U.S. Reps. Mike Gallagher, R-Allouez, Glenn Grothman, R-Glenbeulah, and Scott Fitzgerald R-Juneau, each noted that businesses in their respective districts are hiring but cannot find workers.

"Employers across Wisconsin are reducing business hours, cutting services, and shutting their doors because they are unable to find workers to fill family-supporting jobs," U.S. Rep. Bryan Steil, R-Janesville, said.

U.S. Rep. Tom Tiffany, R-Minocqua, added: "It simply doesn't make sense to pay people to stay home when so many employers are desperate for help."

Read the chamber letter [here](#).

Read the delegates' [letter](#).