

# A Better Wisconsin Together: Callous vote by Republican lawmakers would cost lives and tens of millions in food aid

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MADISON, Wis. — It was already bad enough that Republicans in Wisconsin's state Senate were voting to overturn a live-saving public health order, all to undermine the Democratic Governor. Now it's clear that they didn't bother to check on the consequences of that action. That, or they didn't care that Wisconsin would lose \$49 million per month in food assistance from the federal government. Without intervention from Democrats, Assembly Republicans would likely have taken the vote today to eliminate the mask mandate and the food assistance aid.

As food banks across the country see long lines and many families struggle to make ends meet, eighteen of twenty Republicans in the State Senate voted to repeal the Governor's emergency order, eliminating the mask mandate and taking money out of the pockets of low-income Wisconsinites. The 243,000 households who rely on Wisconsin's FoodShare program would face reductions in benefits. This means children going without food during a global pandemic in which thousands have lost their job.

The lawmakers taking this vote surely will not be among those suffering from the consequences. Assembly Speaker Robin Vos has had no problem accepting federal aid for himself, receiving \$297,600 in forgivable loans for his business. The millionaire politicians will still have food on their tables. Indeed, every member that voted to take away food assistance has been eating on the taxpayers' dime while their constituents go hungry. In addition to their salary and benefits, the members of the least active full-time legislature in the country receive per diems for their

trips to the Capitol. They have each eaten thousands of dollars worth of free lunches, and now are, quite literally, taking food off the tables of the most vulnerable among us.

Commented A Better Wisconsin Together Executive Director Nicole Safar, “What kind of public servant eliminates public health measures and slashes food aid to low-income households in the middle of a global pandemic that has left more than 400,000 Americans dead and millions out of work? Republicans in the State Legislature are more interested in playing politics with the Governor than serving and protecting their citizens. We deserve more from those who claim to govern in our name.”