

Legislative Black Caucus: Statement on Republican leadership's inequitable treatment of joint resolutions

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Madison WI– On Wednesday March 16th, the Black History Month Resolution was once again not placed on the session calendar, and was not passed through the Wisconsin State Legislature. However, a resolution honoring talk show host Rush Limbaugh was passed by the Republican Majority in both houses. On this, the Wisconsin Legislative Black Caucus released the following statement:

“As a caucus, we were asked by Assembly leadership to make concessions in order to even have the Black History Month resolution heard on the floor; these included allowing Assembly Republican leadership to add and remove names from the resolution and to not speak on the resolution; all of which are tools of depreciation and repression.”

“Instead of honoring the achievements of Wisconsin’s Black community, and recognizing the many Black leaders who have connections to our state, legislative Republicans decided to honor a divisive radio show host.”

“If controversy was an issue with the Black History Month resolution, it should have been brought to the floor for an up or down vote, as the Limbaugh resolution was. Instead, the resolution was denied to even be heard by members of both houses. As a caucus, we have and always will stand on the principles of equity and fairness. We demand and expect equal treatment as members of this body.”

“As Members of the Wisconsin Legislative Black Caucus, we are leaders in the Black community. We deserve to honor the members of our community who have broken down barriers and supported our community’s success. We are their voice in the legislative process.”

“The Wisconsin Legislative Black Caucus makes the following request of the legislature’s Republican leadership. One, schedule Assembly Joint Resolution 8, proclaiming that racism and racial inequity constitute a health crisis in Wisconsin, to be brought to the floor on the next session day in both houses. Two, schedule Assembly Joint Resolution 10, proclaiming February 2021 as Black History Month, to be brought to the floor on the next session day in both houses. Three, schedule Assembly Bill 126, creating the Council for Equity and Inclusion and the Office for Equity and Inclusion and making an appropriation, to be brought to the floor on the next session day in the Assembly and the Senate. These important pieces of legislation deserve a chance to be heard on the floor of both houses and receive and up or down vote.”

“The legislature should be leading by example on the issues of equity and inclusion. The legislature should set the bar for what is seen as right and just. By choosing to continue to block meaningful legislation from coming to the floor sends a crystal clear message that the Republican Leadership is not interested in making life better for all Wisconsinites.”

Members of the Legislative Black Caucus are:

Chair- Representative Shelia Stubbs (D-Madison),

Vice Chair- Representative Dora Drake (D-Milwaukee),

Treasurer- Representative Kalan Haywood (D-Milwaukee),

Secretary- Representative Samba Baldeh (D-Madison),

Senator Lena Taylor (D-Milwaukee)

Senator LaTonya Johnson (D-Milwaukee),

Representative David Bowen (D-Milwaukee),

Representative LaKeshia Myers (D-Milwaukee)