

Rep. Baldeh: 27,000 jobs still lost in Dane County due to Covid Crisis, GOP Risks Lives and Jobs on a Maskless-Recovery

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The wide-ranging effects of the pandemic-related recession in Dane County have continued one year after the onset of the virus. The Department of Workforce Development's employment release today reported that Dane County has continued to show a loss of over 27,000 jobs compared to Dec. 2019. That is nearly a 7% loss in employment or one in fourteen workers. Milwaukee County lost 64,000 jobs or 7.5% of its workforce.

State Representative Samba Baldeh noted:

These statistics can be hard to register. But it is all too real for the affected individuals and families. For many, these losses have been a catastrophe leading to homelessness or moving in with other families, students dropping out of college or an illness that remains untreated.

We know that in both Dane and Milwaukee Counties, the toll of job and income loss has not been evenly spread throughout the communities. Low-income workers in the lodging, restaurant, office maintenance and other services have borne most of the losses. Latino and Black workers, who also make up a disproportionate share of the COVID-19 hospitalizations and deaths, have also been most deeply affected by the loss in jobs.

This crisis will continue until the pandemic is brought to an end. While the current

vaccines appear promising, the ever-mutating virus may make them less than optimal. However, what we do know is that the universal use of masks in every public setting coupled with social distancing is immediately effective in reducing the rate of infection. This is a fundamental health practice that has been successfully used worldwide for hundreds of years.

Nonetheless, a majority of the legislature appears poised to discard the tool that we know works best and with it risk more damage to our economy and the health and welfare of tens of thousands of Wisconsinites.