

Rep. Considine: Statement on AB 1

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Madison - Today the Assembly voted on and passed the first bill of the 2021-2022 legislative session. Republicans proposed Assembly Bill (AB) 1, which claims to adequately respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Rep. Dave Considine (D-Baraboo) issued the following statement regarding AB 1:

"I have asked the Assembly to get to work for over 9 months because I know my constituents need assistance. Their businesses are hurting, their communities are overwhelmed with COVID, and they're having trouble putting food on the table.

"What I have been asking for is meaningful legislation to address the pandemic. Late last year, Governor Tony Evers introduced a bill full of compromises that he, the Speaker, and the Senate Majority Leader had agreed upon. On Monday morning, Democrats introduced additional legislation to address COVID-19 including small business support, hazard pay, and assistance to frontline workers. Unfortunately, both of these proposals were ignored and my colleagues across the aisle proposed their own bill full of ideological poison pills.

"Instead of rising to the occasion and working with us to find bipartisan solutions, Republican leaders chose to play political games. AB 1 does not provide funding to continue our community testing efforts or contact tracing work. It doesn't provide meaningful relief for small businesses. It instead provides unlimited immunity to employers even when practicing negligence and disregarding CDC guidelines. It also takes away local control from school boards and public health officials. These are just a few of the many reasons that AB 1 is not a solution to our state's needs.

"We cannot afford to play politics at a time when our country's death rate from

COVID-19 is at an all-time high. That is why I am calling on members from both sides of the aisle to communicate and compromise in the coming days and weeks. We can do better than this when we work together. I look forward to working on real, meaningful action to address our COVID-19 crisis.