

Rep. Vining: Advocates for healthcare heroes, small businesses, and Wisconsin families on Assembly floor

Posted on Thursday, Jan 7, 2021

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MADISON – Today, the Wisconsin State Assembly met for the first time in session to vote on legislation since April. Representative Robyn Vining (D-Wauwatosa) spoke on the floor in support of a substitute amendment of Assembly Bill 1 that would replace the bill with the proposal introduced earlier this week by Assembly Democrats. Rep. Vining's remarks from today's session are as follows:

“Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A new legislative session is a time of hope, and also a time for change and action. Wisconsinites are relying on us to battle the virus, not each other. I don't want to fight you, my colleagues, I want all of us, to band together and fight this deadly and devastating virus, together. In Wisconsin we have lost more than 5,000 lives in our state to COVID-19. We must act now to save lives and ensure Wisconsinites have the support they need to weather this storm. Our amendment creates a bridge to stability and recovery as we fight forward, all of us, together.

“We need to fight for the survival of our small businesses, we need to come alongside our schools and childcare providers, we need fixes to the unemployment system, we need to support our frontline healthcare workers, and we need to do absolutely everything we can to protect the health and safety of each and every Wisconsinite from COVID-19. Our amendment does that.

“Without this amendment, AB1 does not protect the health and safety of Wisconsinites, and notably, it completely ignores our frontline health care workers, our Healthcare Heroes.

“Our Healthcare Heroes are treating Wisconsinites for COVID-19, while they increase their own risk of contracting COVID-19 while they do so.

“Everyone here is genuine when they thank healthcare workers for their work and their contributions to fighting this virus. But words are not enough.

“The Healthcare Heroes provisions in the amendment provide paid sick leave and hazard pay for our frontline workers, and make sure that our Healthcare heroes have the healthcare they need if they contract COVID-19 while working on the frontlines of the pandemic.

“We should make sure that our thanks do not end with mere words or social media posts, but with actual policies that support them, and that’s what this amendment does- it makes sure that while our Healthcare Heroes are doing their job to take care of us, we are doing our job to take care of them.

“Our amendment provides the help Wisconsinites need. After 10 months of anxiety, stress, pain, loss, grief, depression, and exhaustion, we cannot look at the people of Wisconsin and pass a bill that doesn’t provide needed assistance to small businesses, schools, childcare providers, and fixes to the unemployment system. And we cannot look our healthcare heroes in the faces that have been bruised from the biting straps of masks digging into their skin as they’ve risked their lives to save ours for the last 10 months without making it very clear we have heard their cries, we appreciate their work, and we’re going to offer more than words- we are going to offer action. AB1 falls short. Our amendment creates a bridge for Wisconsin to stability and recovery as we fight forward, all of us, together.”

Rep. Vining represents the 14th Assembly District, which includes parts of Brookfield, Wauwatosa, and Milwaukee. For more information, visit Rep. Vining’s website [here](#).