

Sen. Larson: Statement on today's Senate action

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Milwaukee, WI - “296 days. That’s how long it’s been since the Republican-controlled legislature last passed a bill that became law. For a full-time legislature like Wisconsin’s it’s pretty hard to believe. One might be forgiven for wondering if George Webb’s has offered some sort of hamburger promotion if they can hit 300.

“While the unemployment rate sits 2.4 percentage points above pre-pandemic levels, and over 68,000 more people are out of work compared to March of last year, Republicans seem fine with the status quo.

“While the pandemic has seen 546,000 cases, 24,000 hospitalizations, and just under 6,000 deaths, Republicans seem more concerned about preventing lawsuits against businesses and repealing the mask mandate than helping make our state well again.

“The hyper-partisan, largely unhelpful AB1 that made its final passage in the Senate today stands zero chance of becoming law, thanks to poison-pill provisions that betrayed the original bipartisan compromise bill negotiated with Governor Evers just a few short weeks ago.

“If COVID-19 were a wildfire, it would have covered almost 10% of the state by now, and instead of getting the buckets of water ready, my GOP colleagues keep drilling holes in them and blaming Governor Evers for the leakage. By voting to end the mask mandate yesterday, the very first piece of legislation both houses agreed on was one that would directly put our neighbors’ lives at risk. Thankfully, our Governor intervened before it took effect.

“As we saw from the leaked emails from the Assembly Majority leader this week,

the default position of the party in power is to delay, deflect, and cast aspersions. We were all elected with a job to do. I, for one, am sick of trying to work with both hands tied behind my back. With new variants of the virus in our state that spread more easily and may prove more deadly, that 10% infection rate will be just the beginning if we don't get serious and work together in a bipartisan fashion very soon.

"I applaud Governor Evers for his pledge to veto this mutant AB1, and I hope the legislature will get quickly to work on true COVID relief for our schools, the unemployed, our families, and local businesses."