

Rep. Callahan: Votes to improve Wisconsin workforce

Posted on Wednesday, Apr 26, 2023

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[Madison, WI] – Yesterday, State Representative Calvin Callahan (R-Tomahawk) joined his Assembly Republican colleagues in supporting a package of workforce legislation aimed at preventing fraud and abuse in the state’s welfare system, while also encouraging a return-to-work for Wisconsinites who are on the sidelines.

“Unemployment insurance (UI) was never supposed to be a permanent solution,” stated Rep. Callahan. “It was designed as a safety net to help those who have lost their job through no fault of their own as they continue to seek their next job opportunity.”

Some of the bills passed by the Assembly include:

- [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 146](#) – Guaranteed Income Programs provide unearned income to individuals without requiring work or job training on top of their government benefits. AB 146 prevents these programs from being funded with taxpayer dollars.
- [AB 147](#) – This requires the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) to randomly audit 50% of work search actions to ensure that claimants are satisfying statutory work search requirements, among other updates to UI law. Provides legislative oversight and helps to combat fraud in the system.
- [AB 149](#) – Employers have explained that individuals have been “ghosting” job interviews and offers of employment. One employer had over 400 people who never responded to an interview request and another 140 that did not show up for their interview. Individuals on UI need to be ready and available to work and should not be able to collect UI benefits for rejecting work opportunities. AB 149 makes those

repeat offenders of “ghosting” ineligible for UI.

- [AB 150](#) - Rebranding the UI program to the Reemployment Assistance program is important to removing the stigma of unemployment. AB 150 provides all UI claimants job counseling to aid in reentry to the workforce.

“I was proud to support these common-sense measures that would implement additional fraud detection methods, job search assistance, and metric systems to support our state’s workforce. Last election, Wisconsinites were very clear that able-bodied childless adults should be on the hunt for a job if they are receiving state UI benefits. These bills are a step in the right direction.”

The US Department of Labor estimates that Wisconsin’s rate of improper UI payments is 18.32%, which comes to about \$322 million over three years. 30% of these improper payments is because of the work search requirement and the lack of enforcement. According to the [Job Center of Wisconsin](#), there are currently over 97,000 jobs available in the state. These bills now head to the State Senate for their consideration.