

# Rep. Shankland: Responds to assembly floor session on unemployment insurance changes

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MADISON— Following today's session of the Wisconsin State Assembly, Rep. Katrina Shankland (D-Stevens Point) released the following statement regarding the Assembly's passage of Assembly Bills 147, 149, 150, 151, and 152, legislation changing Wisconsin's unemployment insurance program:

"We can all agree that the people of Wisconsin work harder than just about anyone. Across the state, working people are putting in long hours to keep our state and economy moving. As members of the Wisconsin State Legislature, it is our job to pass legislation that prioritizes their needs by putting workers and families first. As the ranking member of the Assembly Committee on Workforce Development and a member of the Governor's Council on Workforce Investment, I welcome any and all opportunities to work together to alleviate the workforce shortage crisis. Today's Assembly session should have advanced meaningful solutions that would mitigate our state's workforce shortage and grow our statewide economy.

"Unfortunately, instead of working on childcare, housing, and transportation, my colleagues across the aisle decided to prioritize misguided, expensive, and ill-advised changes to our state's unemployment insurance program that could actually exacerbate our workforce challenges and cost our state millions of dollars. We should be expanding access to affordable childcare so parents can enter and remain in the workforce, addressing Wisconsin's severe shortage of affordable and available housing to allow workers to live in the communities in which they work, and investing in public transportation to ensure modest-income workers can reliably get to their jobs. All of these initiatives are included in Governor Tony Evers' biennial state budget. It's incumbent on us to put politics aside and pass these

popular policies into law to truly address our workforce challenges.

“Today’s thoughtless approach to workforce challenges would hurt working families and Wisconsin taxpayers, as this series of bills increases costs to the Department of Workforce Development while not funding them. Though I am frustrated with the majority party’s actions on the Assembly floor today, I remain committed to working across the aisle with anyone interested in finding impactful solutions to Wisconsin’s workforce crisis. We should make it easy to work and to keep Wisconsin working, not make it harder to find a job that matches workers’ skill sets and training. I encourage my Republican colleagues to work with us on the real barriers to workforce entry and retention: accessible childcare, affordable housing, and improved public transportation.”