

Sen. Larson: Senate Republicans' campaign of obstruction enters its fifth year

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Madison, WI – Ever since the days of Ronald Reagan, Republicans across the country have delighted in pointing out every example of government failure they can find, both real and imaginary. Republicans in the Wisconsin Senate have elevated it to an art form by not just pointing out instances of failure in the public sector but by going out of their way to cause them.

Today's Senate floor session provides two more stunning examples. First, they continued to use obscure procedural maneuvers to block Governor Evers' ban on conversion torture of LGBTQ+ youth, despite the negative consequences of this so-called "therapy" on our kids, including increased risk of suicide, and despite the practice of conversion being discredited by every major medical organization in the country. Rather than bring a bill to the floor where legislators would have to go on record for or against this harmful practice, they simply sent their objections to committee so they can do the same thing again in two years' time.

Second, even after today's session, where 24 gubernatorial appointments were confirmed, including 3 cabinet-level positions, there are still 183 appointments left unacted upon, including 14 department heads. Many of these appointments have gone unconfirmed for years. There was some hope that this deliberate campaign of obstruction would end once Evers won his second term as Governor. Some Republicans, including Majority Leader LeMahieu, even suggested that all cabinet secretaries would be given an up or down vote.

Sadly, as we near the end of the third month of Evers' fifth year in office, it seems Governor Evers may never see a full, Senate-confirmed cabinet, and our state is worse off for it.

The people of our state deserve representatives who work for them, and who do the best they can to ensure our government functions effectively and efficiently. By abusing the rules process and refusing to act on gubernatorial appointments, Senate Republicans are proving themselves either unwilling or unable to live up to that standard. Neither one is acceptable.