

Sen. Smith: Special session disappointing, but not surprising

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MADISON- Today, Senate Republicans went through the motions of convening a special session of the Legislature, with Senate President Dale Kapenga gaveling in and immediately gaveling back out.

Senator Jeff Smith (D-Brunswick) had the following to say about the brief special session:

“Providers across Wisconsin, from cities to suburbs to rural areas, have tapped every remaining dollar to keep their doors open for the communities and families they serve and to do right by their staff and their kids. This leaves providers in an untenable situation in which they have to choose between raising rates or cutting pay.

“Currently, 54% of Wisconsinites live in a child care desert. When parents do not have child care, they cannot go to work. If Republicans were serious about addressing our state’s current workforce needs, they would ensure that every parent and child has access to affordable and quality child care, regardless of their zip code.

“By refusing to fund childcare, refusing to expand paid leave, refusing to support higher education and job training, we are failing our kids and our families. Our children deserve better, our families deserve better and providers and staff who have been stretched to the breaking point deserve better than the scraps they have been given.

“Wisconsin workers need this legislation. We must fund Child Care Counts in order to address our state’s workforce challenges and do what is best for our kids, our

families, workers and communities. Real investments in Wisconsin's families are imperative to create long lasting structural changes that improve lives and our collective futures.

“Republicans failed to take action on childcare when Governor Evers presented them with this opportunity in his biennial budget, and again today. They won't show up for our kids, but they will funnel hundreds of millions of dollars to billionaire baseball team owners. If Republicans can't be bothered to show up for kids, maybe they shouldn't bother to show up at all.”