

Sen. Smith: Introduces resolution to keep legislature in session to address affordability crisis

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Madison, Wis. – State Senator Jeff Smith (D-Brunswick) introduced a privileged resolution today calling on the Wisconsin Senate to schedule additional floor session days to address rising costs. The resolution comes as the Senate is set to adjourn for the year after convening only 12 regular floor sessions and passing the fewest number of bills into law in the past 25 years.

“Wisconsin families are struggling with rising costs and Republicans would rather throw in the towel than stay one more day to address it,” said Sen. Smith. “Health care premiums are going up. Child care costs are about to skyrocket. Utility rates are increasing by double digits. Farmers are getting squeezed by tariffs and lower crop prices. We have work to do and we shouldn’t adjourn until we provide some sort of relief for working families.”

The resolution highlights multiple factors contributing to the affordability crisis facing Wisconsin residents, including federal tariffs that have increased costs for nearly everything, the expiration of Affordable Care Act subsidies and the upcoming expiration of Wisconsin Child Care Bridge payments on June 28, 2026.

“Republicans have scheduled only a handful of our bills for public hearings or committee votes. Only one made it to the floor for a vote in the Assembly to fund WisEye, and even that bill has yet to be heard in the Senate. That’s not governing, that’s blatant obstruction.”

The resolution also addresses the increased use of paper ballots for committee votes, which has grown from 10 instances in 2009-10 to 104 this session, a 1000%

increase. Paper ballots allow committee chairs to avoid public debate and prevent Democrats from offering amendments to improve the legislation before it reaches the floor.

The resolution calls for the Senate to schedule at least one regular floor session during the week of April 14-16, and to schedule extraordinary sessions as needed through December 31, 2026, to address affordability and pass legislation to lower costs for Wisconsinites.

“The very least we can do is come back at least once in April and give them a break by taking up all the ideas we’ve put forward to lower costs,” Smith said. “Let’s put our heads together and get the job done for Wisconsin families.”