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Contact: Jeanine Schneider, (608) 266-7521

Representative Subeck and Democratic Colleagues Introduce Bill Package to Eliminate Barriers for Unemployed Wisconsinites

MADISON – Today, Representative Lisa Subeck (D-Madison) joined other Legislative Democrats introducing an Unemployment Insurance (UI) related package of bills that would rectify obstacles and expedite the UI claims process. Since March, the COVID-19 pandemic created an unprecedented number of claims for the Department of Workforce Development (DWD).

“Our proposal would eliminate many of the barriers put into place by Republicans that are now having a detrimental effect on working people who have lost their jobs to no fault of their own,” said Rep. Subeck. “With record numbers of Wisconsinites unemployed, now is the time to remove barriers and make it easier to apply for Unemployment Insurance, remove unnecessary eligibility restrictions, and speed up the process to ensure timely distribution of claims.”

Over the past eight years, Republican majorities in the Legislature have enacted unnecessary hurdles that have slowed the UI process during our current crisis. The pandemic has highlighted needed reforms to UI, and this legislation would eliminate barriers.

“Getting Unemployment Insurance claims paid more efficiently and expeditiously will help ease some of the uncertainty faced by hardworking Wisconsinites and their families,” said Rep. Subeck. “While the enactment of Act 185 earlier this year provided some relief to those struggling in the face of this pandemic, the Legislature should convene again to provide relief to those suffering in grips of a clearly broken system.”

Legislation being proposed by Democrats today includes:

- LRB 6244: Allowing social security disability (SSDI) recipients to receive concurrent unemployment insurance benefits;
- LRB 6246: Reinstating the ability of those participating in extended occupational training to receive extended UI benefits;
- LRB 6249: Suspending the \$500 wage threshold for recipients of unemployment insurance benefits temporarily;
- LRB 6254: Providing DWD the authority to determine by administrative rule what constitutes suitable work a claimant must accept if offered, and what labor market conditions to review based on the number of weeks that the claimant has received benefits;
- LRB 6256: Expanding DWD authority to promulgate rules that provider waivers for certain requirements;
- LRB 6257: Eliminating the requirement that claimants wait one week before receiving benefits;
- LRB 6265: Reduces administrative requirements; and
- LRB 6362: Eliminating the concept of substantial fault from being a disqualifying factor.

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78TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT