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## DEVIN LEMAHIEU

STATE SENATOR

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **LeMahieu: Senate Plan to Fund Emergency COVID-19 Response**

**“Existing surplus accounts can fund DHS response activities into new year.”**

**Madison** – Today, Senate Majority Leader-elect Devin LeMahieu (R-Oostburg) announced a plan to provide state funding to the Department of Health Services (DHS) for COVID-19 response activities due to the expiration of federal CARES Act dollars. He issued the following statement:

“Due to judicious budgeting decisions, our state’s medical assistance (MA) fund maintains a significant surplus. DHS has the ability to submit a request to the Joint Committee on Finance to transfer this surplus to an appropriation for the control and prevention of communicable diseases. These funds would then be available for immediate distribution to address the health and safety needs of state residents.

“Many Wisconsinites are feeling the effects of the pandemic. A transfer of this surplus would allow the executive branch, working in concert with the Legislature, to mobilize existing state funds to help those impacted and maintain critical activities in the state’s response to COVID-19 during this period of emergency.

“The Senate Republicans have discussed the various proposals related to COVID-19, some of which involve new and significant state spending increases across a number of new and existing programs. Senate members have serious concerns relating to the most effective distribution of new state funding. The transfer of surplus funds presents an opportunity to act immediately and work together with the Governor on a unified, effective response to our shared hardship.

“Our caucus looks forward to continuing to work with the Governor and the Speaker to refine our policy response together to meet the needs of the entire state.”

*Senator Devin LeMahieu represents the 9<sup>th</sup> Senate District, which includes portions of Sheboygan, Manitowoc, and Calumet Counties. He was recently elected Senate Majority Leader for the 2021-22 legislative session.*

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