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Assembly Passes COVID Relief Bill

MADISON…Today, Representative Tyler August (R-Lake Geneva) voted in favor of legislation that will bring further COVID relief to Wisconsinites. The bill will build upon the previous action taken last year by the legislature to combat COVID. The bill, Assembly Bill (AB) 1, is the first bill of the new legislative session, which started just this week.

"Ensuring we get relief out to families across Wisconsin is crucial," said August. "That is why we acted swiftly to pass the bill as our first act of the 2021-22 session."

Overall, AB 1 has 44 provisions and will reallocate $100 million in funding from existing expenditures to help combat the pandemic.

Specifically, the COVID Relief Bill will do the following:

- Ensure access to medications, vaccines, and testing
- Provide assistance to hospitals, frontline medical workers, and first responders
- Requires DWD to eliminate the Unemployment backlog
- Allow for an "essential visitor" to ensure families can safely visit their loved ones in nursing homes and assisted living facilities
- Give parents the ability to transfer students to schools that offer in-person learning
- Require a vote by local school boards every 2 weeks if they wish to remain virtual
- Protects schools and businesses from frivolous lawsuits
- Legislative oversight of any new federal COVID funding
- Reduce the ability for health officers to make sweeping, unnecessary closures without elected officials having input
- Creates an "all-hands-on-deck" approach to improve vaccination distribution

"I believe this is a strong package that will bring meaningful relief to our state," said August. "I am hopeful that the bill is enacted into law as soon as possible."

The AB 1 now goes to the State Senate for their consideration. If passed by the Senate, the bill will be presented to Governor Evers for his approval.

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