



HOWARD MARKLEIN

STATE SENATOR • 17TH SENATE DISTRICT

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Senate Passes COVID-19 Relief Bill

Legislation contains liability protections for schools, churches; Essential Visitor provision for nursing homes; extends regulatory relief for hospitals

Madison, WI – Senator Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green) released the following statement as the State Senate passed Assembly Bill (AB) 1 as amended by the State Senate:

“Today, the State Senate passed Assembly Bill 1 to address a number of issues related to COVID-19. This is a true compromise bill that has been discussed and negotiated among the Senate, Assembly and Governor Tony Evers. I am proud of our work together to get this done for the people I represent.

Back in June, school districts in the 17th Senate District started asking me about liability protections from frivolous lawsuits related to COVID-19. The threat of unwarranted lawsuits is a threat to re-opening our school buildings. Our schools have enough challenges to manage without this concern. I am proud that we were able to pass legislation with these protections for them.

The bill also includes a directive for all nursing homes and assisted living facilities to allow residents an ‘Essential Visitor’ to enter a nursing home facility to visit in compassionate care situations. The Essential Visitor must agree to comply with public health policies, but they would be allowed to visit in person if the resident is having difficulty adjusting, grieving the death of a friend or family member, experiencing issues with eating or drinking or experiencing emotional distress or a decline in ability or willingness to communicate.

In addition, we extended many provisions of law that the legislature adjusted last spring at the beginning of the pandemic to provide regulatory relief and expedited services so that state regulations do not become hindrances for responding to the pandemic.

Overall, this bill removes obstacles and provides support for schools, healthcare providers, churches and employers to manage and recover from COVID-19.”

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