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Wisconsin Unemployment System Needs Long-Term Change, Technology Upgrade, and Investment

MADISON – Today, the Wisconsin State Assembly will convene for Special Session Senate Bill 1 (SS SB 1), which addresses policy changes needed in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic to aid unemployed Wisconsinites and begin long-overdue upgrades to the state's unemployment insurance (UI) infrastructure. Representative Lisa Subeck (D-Madison) released the following statement ahead of today's vote:

"Once a model for the nation, Wisconsin's Unemployment Insurance program is now in serious need of long-term fixes and upgrades. The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified the challenges unemployed Wisconsinites face when accessing the UI assistance they need. The barriers they face come from Republican policies passed over the last ten years to delay and reduce access to UI coupled with decades of neglect of the system's aging and outdated technological infrastructure.

When push comes to shove, hardworking Wisconsinites have found themselves unemployed at no fault of their own, and they need access to UI to feed and house their families. The unwillingness on the part of Republicans since the start of the pandemic to address this issue has left too many of our state's residents behind in the name of politics.

The bill we will pass today is a critical step toward helping those who have lost their jobs and their income during the pandemic and will begin the process of upgrading our aging infrastructure, but this is not enough. I remain hopeful that the legislature can come together to approve the Governor's proposed investments in our UI infrastructure during the upcoming budget process."

Rep. Subeck has represented the 78th Assembly District since 2015 and serves as vice-chair of the Assembly Democratic Caucus.

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78TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT