



WISCONSIN STATE ASSEMBLY

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DAVID BOWEN
10TH DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 23, 2021

Contact: Rep. David Bowen
(608) 266-7671

Rep. Bowen Statement on Assembly Bill 24
“AB 24 Would Create Risks to Our Freedom to *Live*”

MADISON - In response to the passage earlier today of Assembly Bill (AB) 24, a bill that would forbid the closure of places of worship during outbreaks of COVID-19, State Rep. David Bowen (D-Milwaukee) released the following statement:

“As a state legislator, as a Christian, and as a COVID-19 survivor, today I had to vote against an ill-intended bill that would exempt houses of worship from public health orders that keep people alive. This afternoon, we had to sit and listen as my Republican colleagues tried to lay out a false choice between public health and faith. To hear my GOP colleagues put it, AB 24 is seemingly the only way to protect our faith communities, to protect our churches and other houses of worship, and to protect our rights to freedom of religion.

Those arguments may play well back in those colleagues’ districts, but they simply aren’t true. I can speak for only myself, but my faith is strong enough to weather a pandemic, my church community is as vibrant as it was before this pandemic, and my freedom to worship has never been attacked. Instead of protecting faith communities, AB 24 would put our communities at risk of COVID-19 outbreaks: many of our citizens got sick in large gatherings in places of worship. I know this firsthand - unfortunately, I know that I personally got two fellow church members sick last March, before I knew that I had contracted the virus. Yes, our freedom to worship is critically important, but AB 24 would create risks to our freedom to *live*.

The Bible itself speaks clearly on public worship for the sake of being seen, on hypocrites, on fools, and on wisdom:

‘And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the [houses of worship] and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.’ (Matthew 6:5-8)

‘Pay careful attention, then, to how you live—not as unwise people but as wise—making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So don’t be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.’ (Ephesians 5:15-17)

These and many other parts of the Bible lift up wisdom over the decisions of the fools. I pray Wisconsin Republicans choose wisdom.”
