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Leader Steineke Applauds New GOP Workforce Proposal

State Unemployment System Still a Mess Months After Evers Fires DWD Secretary

MADISON – Earlier today, Representatives Warren Petryk (R-Town of Washington) and William Penterman (R-Columbus) and Senator Roger Roth (R-Appleton) [unveiled new legislation that would make substantial overhauls to Wisconsin’s unemployment insurance program](#) which has seen embarrassing mismanagement under the guidance of Governor Tony Evers. Following the announcement, Assembly Majority Leader Jim Steineke (R-Kaukauna) offered the following statement:

“In times of crisis, governors are expected to lead. Unfortunately, since the very start of the pandemic, Governor Evers has been two steps behind Wisconsin Republicans at every turn in mismanaging this unemployment insurance fiasco.

“While employers were forced to shutter windows and scour for job applicants, [our governor insisted on playing politics](#) and paid extra benefits for folks to stay home and out of the job market.

“While thousands of our neighbors called Evers’ Department of Workforce Development (DWD) for help, we learned that nearly [ninety-nine percent of the phone calls for help went unanswered](#).

“Only after months of mismanagement and incompetence [did Evers eventually fire his DWD secretary](#), while it took another year for him to [outsource the IT benefits system to a private firm](#) – an idea Wisconsin Republicans have been suggesting for months. Unfortunately, [we now know that more than 15,000 Wisconsinites are still waiting for clear direction on their unemployment claims](#).

“Plain and simple, what we’re doing with Wisconsin’s unemployment system is no longer working. I applaud Representatives Petryk and Penterman, and Senator Roth, for showing what real leadership looks like during a time of great turmoil and believe their legislation offers a forward thinking, commonsense approach to helping Wisconsinites gain meaningful employment.

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