

Rep. Krug: Supports Assembly-amended COVID-19 relief bill

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Madison, WI – Representative Scott Krug (R-Rome) voted again for the COVID-19 Relief Bill, reaffirming his support of legislation that would provide Wisconsin with more tools to fight the pandemic. In order to ensure that Wisconsinites have access to necessary medication, COVID tests and vaccines, while still limiting government overreach, the Assembly made amendments to the legislation that was passed by the Senate.

“COVID-19 remains a threat our communities and we will continue to work together to defeat the virus but not at the expense of our freedoms,” said Rep. Krug.

The Assembly reinstated several critical provisions that were removed by the state Senate. The bill once again prohibits employers, the Department of Health Services (DHS) and local health officers from mandating the vaccine. Additionally, the legislation states that DHS and local public health officers may not close places of worship.

“Our country was built on a foundation of freedom, which includes religious freedom and the ability to practice it,” said Rep. Krug. “Unfortunately, the Senate removed these important items from the bill.”

The bill in current form will provide support to hospitals, This bill also creates an “all-hands-on-deck” approach to administering the vaccination, allowing dentists and pharmacy students to administer the vaccine so that everyone who would like to be vaccinated will be able to do so. It gives parents the ability to transfer their children to school districts that offer in-person learning. This version also protects schools and businesses from certain liabilities to reduce the possibility of frivolous lawsuits.

One of ongoing problems that arose during the pandemic is the backlog of unemployment insurance claims. I've heard from so many constituents that have had to wait weeks, even months, for their benefits. This legislation requires the Governor to provide a plan that will reduce outstanding claims and increase the call center hours to assist those in need. There can be no more excuses for delaying the earned benefits being paid to those still waiting.

It is critically important that we focus on mental health as well. AB1 creates a provision that allows families to safely visit their loved ones in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. The "essential visitor" component is crucial in the well-being of our loved ones in assisted care.

"This bill moves Wisconsin forward and will improve the lives of many, and I am proud to support it."