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WISCONSIN STATE SENATE

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Republicans Can't Rewrite Their Own History

Unemployment Woes Were Created by Republicans Long Before the Pandemic

MADISON – As friends and neighbors continue to grapple with the economic fallout of COVID-19 trauma, Republicans continue to hold themselves unaccountable. The lack of urgency from Republicans to act this spring cost the state \$25 million in federal funds for unemployment benefits. When Senate Republicans finally held a public hearing, they offered no solutions and tried to hide the fact that for years they enacted policies to limit and restrict access to unemployment.

“Wisconsin residents shouldn’t be fooled by Republicans hypocritical outrage,” said Senate Democratic Leader Janet Bewley (D-Mason). “This pandemic is revealing how challenges within the Wisconsin unemployment system were caused by Republican policies and further exasperated by their inaction. No matter how hard they try to rewrite their own history, the fact remains that Republicans have spent years tightening and restricting access to unemployment benefits.”

A [memo](#) from the nonpartisan Legislative Council highlights the various bills Republicans enacted over the last eight years to limit and restrict access to unemployment, including instituting a one-week waiting period before claimants can receive payment. As part of the lame-duck session, Republicans also restricted the Governor’s discretion to ease access to unemployment insurance.

“Wisconsin residents deserve better than the disingenuous and misleading accusations from Republicans,” added Bewley. “Whether in Madison or Milwaukee, or closer to home in Ashland or Rice Lake, people are feeling the brunt of Republican politicians that prioritize political power over the well-being of Wisconsin residents. It’s time Republicans acknowledge the fault in their policies and take meaningful corrective action to help Wisconsin residents.”

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