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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Leader Steineke Statement on Special Session**

**MADISON** – Last week, after months of inaction and reactivity from his administration, Governor Evers called for [a headline-baiting special session](#) in an effort to distract from the failures of his Department of Workforce Development (DWD) in the handling of unemployment insurance claims during the COVID-19 pandemic. After opening the special session earlier today, Assembly Majority Leader Jim Steineke (R-Kaukauna) released the following statement:

“The Governor has twiddled his thumbs for months while hard-working Wisconsin families were left out to dry with no income and no assistance from DWD. Now he wants to pass the buck to the legislature in order to save face instead of owning the consequences of his own inaction.

“Governor Evers knows full well that he’s had the power to initiate the changes he’s asking for without a special session or bill from the legislative branch. If he’s waiting for permission to start fixing the problem – he already has that authority and should waste no more time in working to address the system’s shortcomings.

“What today’s special session illustrates is yet another instance of failed leadership by Governor Evers. Instead of using his office and the existing tools at his disposal to lead, our governor has shown yet again he prefers a scoop and shovel approach to problem solving.”

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### **Tony Evers Unemployment Debacle**

[According to the nonpartisan Legislative Audit Bureau](#), from March 15, 2020 through June 30, 2020, a mere **.5% of all calls placed to the DWD unemployment call center were answered.**

As a part of this same audit, the nonpartisan staff found that [the UI system was overwhelmed due to the department’s inaction and failure to make changes to known-problems](#) – not because of a computer system.

The [Legislative Fiscal Bureau has also found several avenues for the Governor and DWD to utilize existing revenues](#) to begin fixing problems associated with the state’s UI system. Instead of requesting new dollars, the governor should begin solving the problem with the tools already at his disposal.