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STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 1ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Jan. 4, 2021

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Rep. Kitchens supports Assembly's COVID package

MADISON, Wis. – On the first official day of Wisconsin's 2021-22 legislative session, the state Assembly formally introduced a COVID-19 relief package that is intended to assist residents, businesses and schools with navigating through the pandemic.

The legislation, which includes 44 separate provisions, has gained the support of state Rep. Joel Kitchens, R-Sturgeon Bay.

“I can't think of a single person in Wisconsin who hasn't been impacted by COVID-19 in one way or another, including infected individuals, business owners, healthcare professionals, parents who've become teachers and those who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own,” Rep. Kitchens said. “I hope we can act on this bill soon so our residents can get the relief they so desperately need.”

The Assembly is introducing the legislation following months of discussions with the governor, frontline workers, businesses and citizens. Many of the provisions in the bill reflect those bipartisan conversations or are continuations of the COVID-19 relief package that was passed last April.

Some of the items in the new proposal would address the backlog in the unemployment insurance system, create a \$100 million fund to respond to the public health emergency, extend prescription orders, allow health service professionals from other states to practice in Wisconsin, guarantee that vaccines are covered by SeniorCare and provide civil liability exemptions for certain entities related to COVID-19 claims.

“I think it is extremely important that we protect our businesses and schools from frivolous lawsuits that could potentially cripple them,” Rep. Kitchens said. “Under the bill, immunity will not apply if the act or omission involves reckless or intentional misconduct. This way, we can safeguard both our residents and our economy.”

A public hearing on the COVID-19 relief package will be held Tuesday in front of the Assembly Committee on Health. The full Assembly is scheduled to vote on the legislation on Thursday.

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