



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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Wisconsin Assembly Passes COVID-19 Response Bill

Madison – Representative Samantha Kerkman (R-Salem Lakes) voted for Wisconsin’s [COVID-19 Response Bill](#) today when the Assembly met in an historic extraordinary session, the first-ever during which a large number of representatives participated virtually.

“Over the last month, I have talked to so many Kenosha County folks from many different backgrounds about what they are experiencing – where they need help and what worries and concerns are most on their minds,” said Rep. Kerkman. “The bipartisan legislation we passed today is the result of many hours of working together to take advantage of federal funding, and offers Wisconsinites a hand-up during this very difficult time.”

The COVID-19 Response Bill eliminates the one-week waiting period for unemployment insurance benefits. This change will be applied retroactively to claims made after March 12 and runs through February 7, 2021.

The bill also allows the state to capture more Medicaid dollars from the federal government to assist as more individuals may need to access coverage after job loss during the pandemic and safer-at-home order.

Also included in the legislation are provisions that:

- Ensures no co-pays for COVID-19 testing and prohibits discrimination in health insurance coverage abased on COVID-19
- Allows pharmacists to extend prescriptions
- Eases licensing requirements for health care professionals and emergency medical responders
- Expands SeniorCare to include coverage of vaccinations
- Provides necessary flexibilities to school districts to complete the school year online
- Requires the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation to develop a plan to assist the state’s main industries (tourism, agriculture, manufacturing, construction and retail)
- Sets aside \$75 million to address future, unexpected needs that federal dollars don’t cover

The COVID-19 Response Bill ensures Wisconsin will receive the full \$2 billion in federal assistance that Governor Evers has sole discretion over spending. The bill now heads to the State Senate.

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