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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Rep. Duchow Supports Public Benefit Accountability

Madison, WI – On Tuesday, State Representative Cindi Duchow (R-Delafield) voted for several bills that increase accountability and reduce the potential for fraud of our state’s public benefit programs.

Rep. Duchow released the following statement upon the conclusion of the Assembly Floor Session:

“I will always support accountability for how we spend taxpayer dollars. The safeguards we passed today will ensure public benefits, such as unemployment insurance, are only going to those who truly need them. These programs are intended as a safety net for people who are down on their luck, not to be abused in perpetuity for those who ‘game’ the system. Additionally, we are protecting taxpayers from being forced to subsidize guaranteed income programs at the local level.”

Assembly Bill 164 tightens some regulations around work search requirements as well as mandates the Department of Workforce Development to participate in the US Department of Labor’s Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESA) program. The RESA program offers tools to unemployed individuals to develop a plan to more quickly reenter the workforce.

Assembly Bill 167 updates the statutory definition of “misconduct.” Employees who are terminated for misconduct are not eligible for Unemployment Insurance (UI). The updated criteria include unauthorized possession of an employer’s property, unauthorized use of an employer’s credit card, and destruction of employer’s records. Additionally, AB 167 clarifies situations where absenteeism qualifies as misconduct. Based upon studies conducted by the US Department of Labor, roughly 25% or of all UI claims are paid out to individuals who are not eligible resulting in \$250 million of waste nationally.

Assembly Bill 168 focuses on identity confirmation, expands the use of cross-checking multiple databases, extends the statute of limitations for those who abused CARES Act funds, and increases educational programs for employers and employees.

“Republicans want to see able-bodied individuals return to the workforce and contribute to society,” Rep. Duchow added. “The goal of these reforms is to reduce fraud and get people back to work.”

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Rep. Duchow represents the 97th Assembly District, which includes the villages of Dousman, Eagle, North Prairie, Oconomowoc, Palmyra, Sullivan, Summit, and Wales; the towns of Concord, Delafield, Eagle, Genesee, Hebron, Mukwonago, Ottawa, Palmyra, and Sullivan; and the City of Delafield.