



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. Box 7882 • Madison, WI 53707-7882

September 15, 2020

Governor Tony Evers
P.O. Box 7863
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Governor Evers:

As you know, businesses are diligently working toward recovering from the effects the COVID-19 pandemic has had on our economy. We are in uncharted territory right now, especially when it comes to helping those who may have become unemployed through no fault of their own. While we continue to have concerns about the timeliness of unemployment insurance claims in our state, as Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Assembly Workforce Development and Labor and Integrated Employment Committees, we also want to bring to your attention the critical issue of our workforce recovery.

September is Workforce Development Month throughout the nation, where we highlight programs to help job-seekers and employers. Before COVID-19, we were successfully working toward finding solutions to address the workforce shortage in Wisconsin. In a survey done in 2019, a majority of businesses ranked the labor shortage as their number one policy issue. That is why in the last budget we worked to strengthen Wisconsin's talent pipeline. We provided funding to the Wisconsin Fast Forward program, increased support for our best-in-the-nation Youth Apprenticeship program, increased investments in our technical colleges, and expanded funding to help people with disabilities enter the workforce.

This issue has not gone away during the pandemic, and many people in our state are, or will be, looking for education and training to find a new career because they lost their job or want to transition to a new career. With the finances of our next state budget unknown, we as a state still have a unique opportunity to help out our fellow Wisconsinites.

We believe it is paramount that you use some of your unallocated CARES Act funding for workforce training. Funding training programs at local technical colleges can connect unemployed workers with available jobs. In addition, our local workforce development boards could use the funding to help unemployed workers connect with local services. As you know, you can direct CARES funds without legislative approval, and we respectfully ask you to allocate these funds to support working families.

Thank you again for listening to our concerns.

Sincerely,

Warren Petryk
State Representative
93rd Assembly District

James Edming
State Representative
87th Assembly District

Barb Dittrich
State Representative
38th Assembly District

Nancy VanderMeer
State Representative
70th Assembly District