



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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

April 3, 2020

Governor Tony Evers
P.O. Box 7863
Madison, WI 53707

Dear Governor Evers:

The CARES Act is a one-time federal windfall that must be spent wisely to help Wisconsin deal with the human and economic catastrophes caused by the coronavirus outbreak. As we learned late last week, Wisconsin will be awarded \$2.2 billion, with \$1.9 billion of that headed directly to the state.

Because of the seriousness of this pandemic, we believe in the importance of setting aside partisan differences and working together. We hope you believe the same.

Over the past two weeks, we have spoken to thousands of Wisconsinites. We have reached out to our local health care providers, business owners, farmers, and local governments to understand their most pressing concerns during this very trying time. As you know, you and your administration have the sole ability to allocate the federal stimulus money, so we would like to outline what we believe are the main priorities of Wisconsinites statewide.

When it comes to healthcare, you have likely heard as we have, that nursing homes are struggling terribly to pay for the necessary personal protection equipment (PPE) that is needed to follow CDC guidelines. Our nursing home workers are on the frontlines of this pandemic. If they are not able to adequately keep residents safe, it will directly impact our hospitals. In addition, PPE is still a need for healthcare and other essential workers across the state. The state also must have more readily available and rapid testing supplies. We hope you will **prioritize the needs of hospitals and healthcare facilities** as you spend these federal resources. We ask that you continue to derive the most accurate data possible as it relates to hospital usage, patient outcomes, and test results so that our healthcare workers can provide the best care possible.

While we believe our priorities align on these issues related to healthcare, we know they diverge when it comes to protecting unborn life. We must voice our strong opposition to classifying abortion providers, such as Planned Parenthood, as an essential service. Considering the federal government has provided guidance shutting down all elective procedures in our hospitals to conserve precious resources and PPE, it is unconscionable that you would allow these facilities to continue to operate. The PPE should be conserved for those frontline healthcare workers battling COVID 19, many of whom are asked to reuse the same mask for days. While we have little hope that you will change your mind on this, we must firmly insist that no federal stimulus money go directly or indirectly to abortion providers.

Our economy is going to suffer greatly because of this shut down. The Federal Reserve is predicting the crisis could drive the national unemployment rate to 32% and the GDP could suffer a 20% decline. In Wisconsin, economists project 15% of our state workforce could be unemployed as soon as this summer. Please consider **safeguards for our business owners and workers**. We have said publicly we are in favor of repealing the one-week waiting period for unemployment and will look to take it up as soon as the Legislature convenes. We would like you to consider building in unemployment assistance for business owners and direct any other resources available to help business owners and farmers stay afloat in these difficult times.

Also our local governments will no doubt be stretched thin due to the extra costs related to PPE procurement, increased use of fire, police and EMS services, and increased costs for absentee ballot mailings. We would ask that the state provide **assistance to our local governments**, if allowed under the purview of the federal stimulus bill. In addition, our homeless population will continue to struggle. Providing vouchers so that local governments can find alternate housing for those who lack shelter as well as finding ways to support our food pantries would also be worthwhile endeavors.

We know that this pandemic is going to bring with it a high price tag. These stimulus dollars will help stem the tide that we know is going to affect our state finances. Very soon, you will instruct state agencies to craft their state budget requests. These economic uncertainties are going to make that a difficult task, as we have no idea how far our revenues will fall. Please use every tool at your disposal, including the state offices of Inspector General within your administration, to be as mindful as possible in your spending decisions. In the upcoming fiscal year and the next budget, we will have to be more careful than ever. Considerations like **tax increases or other economically detrimental policies cannot and should not be an option**.

Finally, during this crisis, it is more important than ever that we allow Wisconsinites to observe their individual faiths. To that end, we ask that you work with Wisconsin churches and temples to allow them to hold Easter or Passover services, even if it's outside. For many of us, being a part of these services will offer much-needed solace during these uncertain times.

Sincerely,



Rep. Robin J. Vos
Assembly Speaker



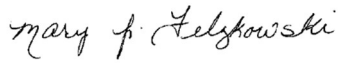
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Majority Leader



Rep. Tyler August
Speaker Pro-Tempore



Rep. Dan Knodl
Majority Caucus Chair



Rep. Mary Felzkowski
Assistant Majority Leader



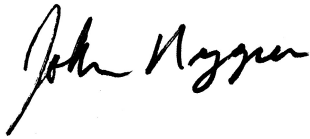
Rep. Romaine Quinn
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Rep. Jessie Rodriguez
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Rep. Samantha Kerkman
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Joint Committee on Finance



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41st Assembly District



Rep. Mark Born
39th Assembly District



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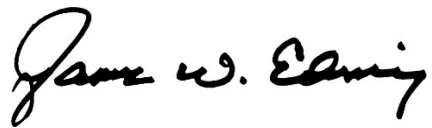
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60th Assembly District



Rep. Barbara Dittrich
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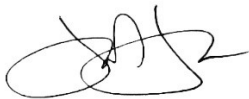
Rep. Rick Gundrum
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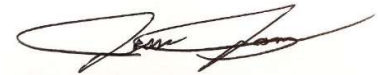
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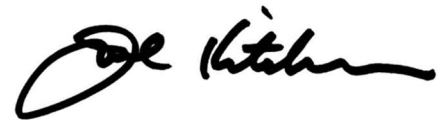
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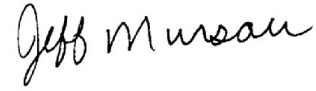
Rep. John Macco
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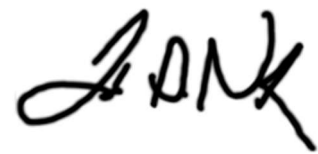
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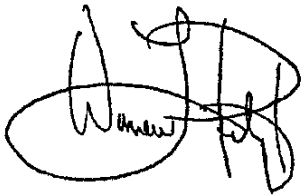
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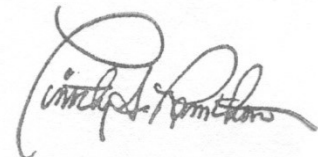
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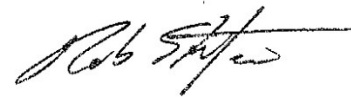
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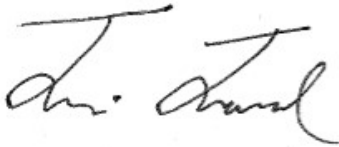
Rep. Gary Tauchen
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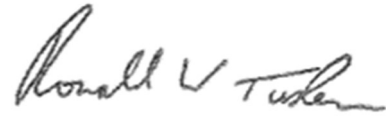
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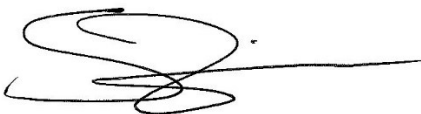
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Rep. Shannon Zimmerman
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