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Contact: Rep. Melissa Sargent

608.266-0960

Wage Theft Bill will Divide Wisconsin, Hurt Workers

MADISON – Today, Rep. Melissa Sargent (D-MADISON) blasted the GOP for their plan to introduce and pass divisive, anti-worker legislation as early as next week.

"Let's call this what it really is. Plain and simple, this is a wage theft bill," stated Rep. Sargent.

The average worker in states with Right to Work laws makes 12 percent less annually than workers in states without similar laws when all other factors are removed. Rates of poverty and people lacking health insurance are also higher in states with Right to Work laws. Workers in states with these laws have also been found to be less safe due to a lack of bargaining of over workplace conditions and a lack of safety training.

"It is important that the treatment of our workers reflects the challenges and dangers that they face on a daily basis. This proposal would also suppress wages for the true profit creators, the workers, which are already growing at a slower rate than the national average, and further polarize our state," continued Rep. Sargent.

"People struggling to find work and stay in the middle class do not need this divisive legislation. Instead, we should be supporting workers' rights and helping to build the economy. I know that workers deserve the freedoms that unions provide. The freedom to take a sick day if they need to get well or help take care of a family member, the freedom to earn a family sustaining wage, and the freedom to work in a safe environment are things that I will always fight for."

"I will strongly oppose any legislation that sanctions wage theft like this proposed bill. We have a moral responsibility to pay those who show up every day and create profits, a fair wage," Rep. Sargent concluded.

Representative Sargent was active in the 2011 protests regarding similar anti-union legislation. She ran for State Assembly shortly after this and took office in 2013.

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