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Senate Passes Bi-Partisan COVID-19 Response Bill

West Point – Today, the Senate passed Assembly Bill 1038 to help address the COVID-19 Pandemic. Our state is facing significant challenges as we respond to COVID-19, and we need to do everything we can to provide relief to workers, families, businesses, and farmers who are suffering as a result. I am happy that both sides of the aisle were able to come together to pass this long overdue package. However, we still have a lot of work to do to pass meaningful and comprehensive legislation that supports the people who need it the most.

I joined my Democratic colleagues in introducing three amendments. The first included provisions that were originally introduced by Governor Evers to help push this legislation further in areas such as worker compensation for all frontline and critical workers, investments in businesses and farmers, relief for childcare providers and families, and resources for public health.

Additionally, Democrats introduced an amendment that would direct that voters in elections during a state of emergency be provided absentee ballots, allow more time for clerks to count the ballots and remove barriers to voting. After the Spring Election, it became clear that there needs to be additional measures in place to protect voters and our democracy. Voters should never have been forced to choose between their health and casting their vote, and this amendment would ensure that what happened last week would never happen again.

Finally, Democrats introduced an amendment that ensure that the provisions that were passed today would work to provide immediate protection to Wisconsinites should another pandemic happen. Unfortunately, Republicans rejected all of the Democrats' amendments and stifled the state's response to COVID-19.

Bi-partisan action in the face of this pandemic and its fallout has been needed for weeks. We still have work to do and Democrats are ready to come together with Republicans to ensure that our state is equipped to respond to this crisis, and support Wisconsinites in their time of need.

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