



John Nygren

WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE ★ 89TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Finance

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Stop the Excuses Gov. Evers, Fix Unemployment Insurance Now

Madison--State Representative John Nygren (R-Marinette), Co-Chair of the Joint Committee on Finance, released the following statement:

After the Supreme Court struck down Governor Tony Evers' stay-at-home order, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) wasted no time trying to blame the ruling for their persistent woes in trying to process unemployment claims. Earlier this week, it was reported that one in three claims is unpaid.

“Governor Evers, the buck stops with you. DWD needs to spend more time working to find ways to speed up the claims process and less time making excuses for their inability to effectively process unemployment claims,” said Rep. Nygren. **“We have constituents that have been waiting over 60 days for benefits. Enough is enough. We need more action and less time passing blame.”**

After the Supreme Court ruling, DWD updated its FAQs to blame the court ruling for putting individuals in adjudication. Interestingly, DWD did not do the same when Governor Evers “turned the dial” to allow certain businesses to open with Emergency Order #34.

The attached legal memo confirms DWD's misinterpretation and that the court ruling did not directly affect DWD. According to the Legislative Reference Bureau, “both the supreme court's ruling and the effect of a business being allowed to reopen under Emergency Order #34 could have resulted in an employer reopening and recalling employees.”

This week the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported that DWD still has not extended call center hours even though one in every three claims have gone unpaid. **Representative Nygren is again calling for DWD to extend call center hours.** As of this morning, DWD's website continues shows call center hours from 7:35am to 3:30pm even though DWD claimed it would extend hours from 7:00am to 5pm. Even if this extension occurs, it is not enough. The call center should be open seven days a week with extended hours until the backlog is eliminated.

Representative Nygren is also calling on DWD to post on its website daily updates on all backlogged claims, the reasons the claims are in pending status and how many calls DWD takes and how many callers cannot get through. More transparency may lead to better decisions to responsibly expedite these claims. **“It does not take a new IT system to be transparent or to add call center hours,”** said Rep. Nygren.

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