



Jon Erpenbach

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR · DISTRICT 27

November 20, 2020

Dear Senator Kapenga:

As a leader in the Wisconsin Senate, your comments Tuesday were considerably troubling. This virus is not happening somewhere else, it is happening right here in Wisconsin, to our friends, family and neighbors. In fact, the county that you represent, Waukesha has been one of the hardest hit. To give you an idea of what is going on out there, let me provide you with a few staggering statistics about Waukesha County:

- The COVID-19 case burden is listed as “critically high” - a new category that DHS had to come up with because saying it was “very high” wasn’t even enough to describe what our health care workers and our families are experiencing. What this means is that there are 1,815.7 people with COVID for every 100,000 people in Waukesha County. The case burden in Waukesha County has increased by 67% over the last two weeks.
- 43% of COVID tests in Waukesha County have been positive in the last seven days.
- COVID hospitalizations have grown 31% in the last two weeks.
- 79% of the hospital beds in Waukesha County are full and 93.5% of the hospital beds in your region are being used.
- 73% of the ICU beds in your county are being used and 92.9% of the ICU beds in your region are being used.
- Your region has seen a 27% increase in the number of COVID patients needing the ICU.
- 177 people in Waukesha County have died; that’s the second highest number of deaths in the state. This number represents Moms and Dads, Grandmas and Grandpas, friends, neighbors and coworkers who won’t be able to open a business, go to a restaurant, teach our kids, or have Thanksgiving dinner.

All data can be readily found on the DHS website and the Waukesha County Public Health website

The Republicans in the Wisconsin State Senate have not acted on this crisis since April 15th. Many of the things that you did back then have since expired. You have gone seven months without assisting our doctors and nurses, our first responders, our nurses our small businesses and our schools. That means when the federal funding ends on December 31st, we have no way to respond to this.

You were one of the loudest legislators complaining about the Department of Workforce Development, yet yesterday you indicated you supported reinstating a one week waiting period for benefits. By comparison, it’s been 31 weeks since Senate Republicans have come to work. Why should hard-working Wisconsinites face a waiting period? You don’t support a temporary pause on evictions and foreclosures. Do you support pushing your constituents into homelessness? You don’t support additional contact tracing but Waukesha County Public Health had to move into Crisis Standards of Practice for notifying positive cases and contacts in mid-October. Surely they would be “real keen” on some assistance.

This isn’t fear mongering. This is real life. This is happening in Wisconsin, this is happening in Waukesha County. We have a responsibility to our constituents. The sooner we get this virus under control, the sooner we can shop on our Main Streets, dine in our restaurants, go to a Bucks game or enjoy an Old Fashioned at our local taverns. But we can’t

do any of that unless we come to the table and work on solutions together instead of opposing everything out of hand or taking these safety measures to court.

I look forward to hearing your ideas to help keep Wisconsin safe and back on its feet.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jon Erpenbach". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "E".

JON ERPENBACH
State Senator
27th District