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**This is No Time for Legislators to Rest**

By  
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Students are floating down the river while friends and families are enjoying outdoor fairs and festivals. It's finally summer; time for a break, right?

Many assume legislators are on summer break after passing the budget, and I can't help but wonder why. After all, families are still struggling to make ends meet, thousands of us are still waiting for affordable healthcare and many public schools continue to lack much needed resources. The list is long, and I can honestly say I'm having trouble relaxing this 'summer break' knowing our needs haven't been met.

So why aren't your elected legislators meeting, debating and voting on ways to solve these problems?

Assembly Speaker Vos shared his summer break plans well before voting on the budget. He had no intention of calling the Assembly back to work until October if he disagreed with the budget's outcome. Talk about a long summer break.

It's unlikely the legislature will meet over the winter holidays. When we do return in 2020, it'll only be for a few months. This may be the least amount of work done by any legislature.

Why is that? The Senate Majority Leader determines our calendar while the Speaker determines the Assembly's calendar. Perhaps these Republican leaders are uninterested in working with our Democratic Governor.

That leaves legislators, like myself, looking for other ways to fulfill our promise in serving the people of Wisconsin. Elected officials shouldn't expect constituents to reach out first, so I do my best to come to you.

Last week, Representative Emerson and I made ourselves available with mobile office hours on Eau Claire bus routes. Throughout the day, we heard from constituents riding buses who normally may not feel comfortable approaching their legislators. Many brought up concerns regarding income inequality, healthcare access and criminal justice reform. These problems don't take a vacation.

Handing out enormous tax cuts to large manufacturers isn't the way to address income inequality and raise everyone up. Republicans' rejection of Medicaid expansion isn't the way to affordable healthcare. And prison isn't the solution for people struggling with addiction and mental health.

Before the 2018 election and since taking office, Governor Evers insisted he won't rest until Wisconsin accepts the Medicaid dollars that are rightfully ours. I know Governor Evers, and I have no doubt he'll keep that promise. I proudly back him in this important mission.

So when you think it's over, that some radical and careless Republicans won this battle, think again. This issue isn't going away as long as people are overpaying for or completely lacking health insurance. How can it? We're still paying for it through our taxes, and other states like Illinois and Louisiana are using our federal money instead of us.

Without debate and hearings in the Capitol, it'll take even more diligence from all of us. Legislators need to show up in communities and remind citizens and the media this legislature hasn't solved our state's problems.

When you see a legislator, don't automatically think they must be on some sort of "well deserved" break. When you get the chance, ask why they aren't demanding we work until critical issues are fixed. Contact our legislative leaders and tell them "get to work". We shouldn't take a summer vacation until our job is done.