Republican legislative leaders skip action on student loan debt relief, clean drinking water, and economic development as they rush bill banning Democratic candidate from serving.

MADISON - Ignoring public calls for action on student loan debt relief, access to clean drinking water and investments in economic development, Legislative Republicans are fast-tracking a bill to block Winnebago County Executive **Mark Harris**, a Democratic candidate in the 18th Senate District, from serving in the legislature.

The politically motivated attack comes in the final days of a legislative session that has seen Legislative Republicans more focused on boosting Gov. Walker's presidential campaign ambitions than finding solutions to help hardworking families.

"This bill is a desperate and unprecedented attack on our democratic values," said Senate Democratic Leader **Jennifer Shilling** (D-La Crosse). "It's a petty and vindictive bill designed to limit local control and consolidate political power. Voters should be free to pick the candidate they believe best represents their values. They don't need Republican politicians in Madison telling them who they can and can't vote for."

The bill, Senate Bill 707, would block locally elected officials from serving in the state legislature. When asked about the proposal in an interview, bill author and Senate Republican Leader Scott Fitzgerald (R-Juneau) admitted that “Harris’ candidacy was the impetus for the bill.”

Since taking power in 2011, Republican leaders have attacked Wisconsin’s open record laws,

dismantled the non-partisan Government Accountability Board, gutted campaign finance protections, exempted politicians from John Doe criminal investigations and gerrymandered legislative districts.

“Wisconsin families are tired of the increasing corruption and misplaced priorities of Republican legislators,” added Shilling. “This power grab reflects a fundamental lack of respect for our democracy and Wisconsin voters. Republicans should focus less on protecting their own jobs and work with Democrats to restore school funding, address the student loan debt crisis and protect access to clean drinking water."

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Legislative Staffer Tony Palese contributed to this story.