

GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

August 4, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 151** in its entirety.

This bill would require state agencies and authorities that coordinate, oversee or operate workforce development programs to track and report the performance of each such program using performance indicators similar to those used in federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) reporting. This bill specifies that the following programs would fall under the definition of a workforce development program: (a) Transform Milwaukee Jobs and Transitional Jobs programs, (b) initiatives offered by the Department of Corrections that reintegrate offenders, (c) employment and training programs administered by the Department of Children and Families, and (d) the Wisconsin Works program administered by the Department of Children and Families.

'Reforms' to change or restrict economic assistance programs that are definitionally designed to support individuals and families experiencing economic hardship are not a silver-bullet solution to our state's workforce challenges. Indeed, if they were, then presumably the broad, sweeping changes passed by Republicans in this Legislature – many of whom are still serving – and enacted under my predecessor years ago now would have yielded substantial or material workforce benefits. And yet, our state's workforce challenges persist.

I continue to be perplexed by the Legislature's misplaced emphasis on changing and restricting economic assistance programs while offering no other comprehensive solutions or plans to meaningfully address our state's workforce challenges. Especially concerning is that, rather than supporting and passing the solutions and plans I have offered to comprehensively address our state's workforce challenges even in the absence of any plans of their own, the Legislature's apparent focus remains re-passing bills I have previously vetoed.

The people of Wisconsin expect their legislators to prioritize pressing issues facing our state and to work together to find real, impactful solutions to address those issues. The workforce challenges that have long plagued our state – challenges I believe will be imminently exacerbated by the looming fiscal cliff facing our state's child care industry – deserve the Legislature's immediate attention and urgent effort. The continued failure to address these challenges

head-on will be catastrophic for our state's workforce, our communities, and our economy.

My commitment to the people of Wisconsin remains – I will always try to do the right thing, and I am committed to working with any legislator on either side of the aisle who shares my concerns and is ready to work together on substantive legislation to comprehensively address our state's workforce challenges.

Therefore, I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the duplicative, unnecessary and burdensome provisions created in this bill. The Department of Workforce Development, in coordination with its various workforce partners, already works to enhance program alignment across agencies and streamline workforce-related reporting required under federal law. Further, many of the state's workforce development programs do not fit within the current reporting structure under WIOA and have separate requirements under current state law.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor