



JIM DOYLE
GOVERNOR
STATE OF WISCONSIN

January 6, 2006

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE SENATE:

I am vetoing Senate Bill 171 in its entirety. This bill prohibits school boards from calling a special election to hold referenda to seek voter approval for the purpose of borrowing money or exceeding the revenue limit applicable to the school district.

Under current law, school boards must obtain, through referenda, approval of the school district's electors for either of these purposes. Referenda may be held at the next regularly scheduled primary or election held at least 45 days after adopting the borrowing resolution or at least 42 days after adopting the resolution to exceed the limit is filed. Additionally, referenda may be held at a special election. This bill prohibits a school board from calling a special election for either of these purposes, except that a special election could occur in the odd-numbered years on the second Tuesday in September and the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. Under the bill, referenda to borrow money or exceed the revenue limit could be held on just four possible dates in any year.

I am vetoing Senate Bill 171 because I believe it places an unnecessary and burdensome restriction on local communities. Current law already requires school boards to provide ample notice for upcoming referenda held during a special election. This bill would limit the ability of school boards to respond to emergencies or financial crises. The children in a school building where a roof collapsed should not have to wait an additional three months or more for repairs simply because the roof happened to collapse just after a regularly scheduled election.

Elected school board members are accountable to local voters. The best way to influence the scheduling of school referenda is to encourage citizens to vote for school board members who reflect their views, not by eroding local control with more state mandates.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM DOYLE
Governor