

## GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 22, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 233** in its entirety.

This bill requires the Governor to allocate \$200 million of federal funds received under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) for the purpose of providing grants to qualifying businesses. Qualifying businesses under the bill are those which hold a valid business tax registration certificate, had total annual sales of less than \$7 million, suffered economic damage resulting from the COVID-19 global pandemic, is not on the list of the Department of Revenue's list of delinquent taxpayers and it is not on the Department of Transportation's list of debarred contractors. The bill specifies that before the department may accept applications for grants under the program, the department must submit a plan for the implementation of the program to the Joint Committee on Finance. The cochairs of the Joint Committee on Finance may then either direct the department to implement the plan or call a meeting of the full committee within 14 days of the plan's receipt to either approve the plan or modify the plan.

I object to this bill and am vetoing it because it limits the ability to use federal funds with the flexibility necessary to confront the variety of challenges posed by recovery from the COVID-19 global pandemic and respond to Wisconsin's changing needs over the course of the pandemic and our recovery. In Wisconsin, the role of the Governor to oversee use of federal funds under Section 16.54 of the Wisconsin Statutes is clearly established and has been in place for decades, a fact that was confirmed by legislative leadership in a letter they sent to me in April 2020. Using this authority, I have already announced my intent to direct \$600 million of the new federal funds under ARPA to provide additional assistance to small business, and this bill would set up an additional process that would slow down the ability to get a smaller amount of help to Wisconsin small businesses.

Respectfully submitted,  
*TONY EVERS*  
Governor