

## GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 957** in its entirety.

This bill prohibits a political subdivision from enacting certain regulations for an animal facility in an area that is zoned exclusively or primarily for agricultural use, unless the activity affected presents a substantial threat to public health or safety or the regulations are otherwise specifically authorized. Specifically, political subdivisions may not establish: (1) animal welfare standards that are more stringent than those in state law or regulations; (2) medication and vaccination requirements that are not required or prohibited under state law or regulations; (3) limits on the use of animals while in or after leaving an animal facility, except as provided in state law or regulations; or (4) limits on the species of animal that may be raised or kept in an area that is zoned exclusively or primarily for agricultural use. The bill further provides that existing local ordinances, resolutions, or orders that conflict with the bill may not be enforced unless the regulated activity presents a substantial threat to public health or safety.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety for several reasons. First, I object to removing control over animal welfare standards from local authorities and preempting their ability to pass ordinances with the interests of their community in mind. This bill removes the ability for local residents in municipalities throughout the state to engage in self-government by passing local ordinances related to animal welfare in animal facilities.

I am also vetoing this bill because I object to potentially revoking, simply through conflict with the provisions of this bill, existing ordinances related to animal welfare that voters in municipalities throughout the state have enacted through ballot measures.

Finally, I am vetoing this bill because of the potential impact on enforcement of animal welfare regulations at the local level. The broad language included in this bill may result in local municipalities not pursuing other enforceable ordinances that protect animal welfare due to lack of clarity with respect to the scope of the restrictions in this bill.

Respectfully submitted,  
*TONY EVERS*  
Governor