

## GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 21, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 543** in its entirety.

This bill would modify certain election procedures by substantially reducing the distance between election observers and the election workers and processes they are observing. The bill also explicitly states that election observers shall have access to all stages of the election process and creates penalties to enforce these provisions against election officials. Additionally, the bill would apply election access provisions to recount procedures.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to reducing the distance between election observers and the tables where election activities are occurring. Wisconsin's existing laws already provide robust election security measures to ensure persons who wish to observe our elections have the opportunity to do so. Under current law, Wisconsin's election procedures specify that individuals may observe election activities at a minimum distance of three feet and a maximum of eight feet at polling places, in-person absentee voting sites, and absentee ballot processing locations. This allows observers sufficient proximity to ensure election procedures are being followed correctly while also making sure local officials can provide appropriate viewing areas, given the space available, without impeding the work of local clerks, election administrators, and poll workers. This bill mandates that election observers may be no more than three feet away, increasing the potential for observers to interfere with or intimidate eligible voters casting their ballot as well as election officials performing their critical responsibilities.

I cannot support legislation that could enable voter intimidation and prevent election workers from effectively and efficiently carrying out their important duties without interference.

Sincerely,  
*TONY EVERS*  
Governor