

## GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 21, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 572** in its entirety.

This bill would require the administrator of a residential care facility or qualified retirement home, or the administrator's designee, to email each designated contact of each facility occupant who intends to vote by absentee ballot with special voting deputies to inform them of the dates and times when the voting deputies will be visiting the facility or home, and to allow them to be present in the room where the voting is conducted. The bill would also require a circuit court to notify the Elections Commission, the voter, and the voter's guardian if the court determines an individual is incapable of understanding the objective of the elective process and is therefore ineligible to vote. Within three business days of receiving a notification of such ineligibility, the Elections Commission would be required to change the status of the voter to inactive on the official voter list, make a note on the list that the voter is not eligible to vote, and notify the voter and the voter's municipal clerk of this change in status. If a court restores a voter's right to vote, the court must notify the Elections Commission, and the commission must, within three business days, notify the voter that the voter is eligible, including with such notice a registration form, which the voter must complete prior to voting. The bill would further require a clerk to examine the registration list before issuing a ballot to a voter. Finally, the bill would revise the voter registration form with respect to information relating to incompetency or disqualification and would modify current law so that a person who has been determined ineligible to vote due to incompetency would not be guilty of a Class I felony if they vote during an election, though the person's vote would still be excluded.

I appreciate portions of this bill designed to better ensure individuals found ineligible to vote due to incompetency are made inactive on the voter list and protected from unnecessary felony charges if they mistakenly attempt to vote. However, I am vetoing this bill because I object

to an administrator being legally required to contact every designated contact for every facility resident who intends to vote through special voting deputies.

Every eligible Wisconsin resident should be able to cast their ballot without fear of interference or intimidation, including aging and older adults. Current law already permits facilities to notify a resident's designated contact who is a relative when absentee voting will be conducted if requested by the relative. However, the fact that an individual is a resident's designated contact for healthcare purposes does not necessarily mean the resident wants, needs, or is comfortable with that individual supervising the resident's voting. I cannot support legislation that could enable voter intimidation and interference while depriving eligible aging and older Wisconsin residents casting their ballot of the dignity, privacy, and independence afforded to every other eligible Wisconsin voter.

Sincerely,  
*TONY EVERS*  
Governor