

GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 610** in its entirety.

This bill would require any institution of higher education that receives public funding and that requires any student or prospective student to receive an immunization as a condition of attendance to waive the immunization requirement for a student or prospective student if the student or prospective student objects to the immunization for reasons of health, religion or personal conviction. In addition, the bill would stipulate that no institution of higher education may require that a student or prospective student provide any explanation or justification of the student's or prospective student's objection to an immunization. Finally, the bill would require an institution of higher education that receives public funding to inform a student or prospective student of the student's or prospective student's right to a waiver from the institution of higher education's immunization requirements in writing at any time the institution of higher education informs the student or prospective student of the immunization requirements.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Wisconsin State Legislature's efforts to micromanage decisions to respond to public health incidents and restrict existing tools available higher education institutions to keep students, faculty, staff safe and healthy on their campuses. Efforts to respond to public health incidents or emergencies should be based on science and the expertise of public health experts aimed at mitigating and preventing further spread and infection. Higher education institutions have a higher risk for outbreaks of certain communicable diseases due to students living in close quarters, among other unique factors. Vaccines are safe, effective and key to preventing serious illness, hospitalizations, and death from certain communicable diseases. I trust that Wisconsin's higher education institutions are well equipped to implement mitigation measures, as necessary, in consultation with public health experts to keep their campuses healthy and safe without the political interference of the Legislature.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor