



Executive Vetoes of Bills Passed by the 2021 Legislature Excluding the Executive Budget Act



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INTRODUCTION

This report contains the veto messages of Governor Tony Evers affecting all legislation, except the executive budget act, 2021 Wisconsin Act 58, as passed by the 2021 Wisconsin Legislature. See *LRB Reports*, volume 5, number 5, for the partial vetoes of 2021 Wisconsin Act 58.

Status of legislation

During the 2021–22 biennium, 2,307 bills were introduced, of which 267 were enacted into law, 126 were vetoed in full, and 1 was vetoed in part. Two of these bills and one of these enactments were introduced as part of the January 2021 Special Session.

Report format

This report provides the following information:

1. The legislative action for each fully or partially vetoed bill, including the vote for final passage in each house and the page number of the loose-leaf journals in each house referring to the vote. “S.J.” stands for Senate Journal; “A.J.” stands for Assembly Journal.
2. The text of the governor’s veto message for each vetoed bill.

HISTORY OF VETO PROCESS

Wisconsin governors have had the constitutional power to veto bills in their entirety since the ratification of the Wisconsin Constitution in 1848. In November 1930, the people of Wisconsin approved a constitutional amendment granting the governor the additional power to veto appropriation bills in part. The new partial veto authority was used immediately beginning with the 1931 session.

Article V, section 10, of the Wisconsin Constitution grants the veto power to the governor. The following is reprinted from the *Annotated Wisconsin Constitution*, published April 13, 2022:

Governor to approve or veto bills; proceedings on veto. SECTION 10. [As amended Nov. 1908, Nov. 1930, April 1990 and April 2008]

(1) (a) Every bill which shall have passed the legislature shall, before it becomes a law, be presented to the governor.

(b) If the governor approves and signs the bill, the bill shall become law. Appropriation bills may be approved in whole or in part by the governor, and the part approved shall become law.

(c) In approving an appropriation bill in part, the governor may not create a new word by rejecting individual letters in the words of the enrolled bill, and may not create a new sentence by combining parts of 2 or more sentences of the enrolled bill.

(2) (a) If the governor rejects the bill, the governor shall return the bill, together with the objections in writing, to the house in which the bill originated. The house of origin shall enter the objections at large upon the journal and proceed to reconsider the bill. If, after such reconsideration, two-thirds of the members present agree to pass the bill notwithstanding the objections of the governor, it shall be sent, together with the objections, to the other house, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two-thirds of the members present it shall become law.

(b) The rejected part of an appropriation bill, together with the governor's objections in writing, shall be returned to the house in which the bill originated. The house of origin shall enter the objections at large upon the journal and proceed to reconsider the rejected part of the appropriation bill. If, after such reconsideration, two-thirds of the members present agree to approve the rejected part notwithstanding the objections of the governor, it shall be sent, together with the objections, to the other house, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two-thirds of the members present the rejected part shall become law.

(c) In all such cases the votes of both houses shall be determined by ayes and noes, and the names of the members voting for or against passage of the bill or the rejected part of the bill notwithstanding the objections of the governor shall be entered on the journal of each house respectively.

(3) Any bill not returned by the governor within 6 days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to the governor shall be law unless the legislature, by final adjournment, prevents the bill's return, in which case it shall not be law. [*1905 J.R. 14, 1907 J.R. 13, 1907 c. 661, vote Nov. 1908; 1927 J.R. 37, 1929 J.R. 43, vote Nov. 1930; 1987 A.J.R. 71, 1989 S.J.R. 11, vote April 1990; 2005 J.R. 46, 2007 J.R. 26, vote April 2008*]

BILLS VETOED IN FULL

Assembly Bill 1: State government response to COVID-19 pandemic

On January 7, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 1 (as amended by Assembly Amendment 1) by a vote of 56 to 34, Paired 2, A.J. 1/7/21, p. 23.

On January 12, 2021, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 1 (as amended by Senate Amendment 2) to Assembly Bill 1 by a vote of 29 to 2, S.J. 1/12/21, p. 34, and concurred in Assembly Bill 1, as amended, on a voice vote, S.J. 1/12/21, p. 34.

On January 26, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Substitute Amendment 1 (as amended by Assembly Amendments 1 and 2) by a vote of 58 to 34, Paired 2, A.J. 1/26/21, p. 41.

On January 28, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Amendments 1 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1) and 2 to Senate Substitute Amendment 1 on a voice vote, S.J. 1/28/21, p. 76.

On January 28, 2021, the assembly received from the senate Assembly Amendments 2 (as concurred in) and 1 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1), A.J. 1/28/21, p. 44, and concurred in Senate Amendment 1 to Assembly Amendment 1 to Senate Substitute Amendment 1 (as amended by Assembly Amendment 2) by a vote of 59 to 35, Paired 2, A.J. 1/28/21, p. 47.

On February 5, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Amendment 2 to Senate Amendment 1 to Assembly Amendment 1 to Senate Substitute Amendment 1 by a vote of 19 to 11, S.J. 2/5/21, p. 91.

On February 5, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 1, A.J. 2/5/21, p. 64.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

February 5, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 1** in its entirety.

Assembly Bill (AB) 1 relates to state government actions to address the COVID-19 pandemic, extending the time limit for emergency rule procedures, providing an exemption from emergency rule procedures, and granting rule-making authority. Among other provisions, the bill limits the Department of Health Services and local health officers authority relating to gatherings. The bill also strips employers of their ability to keep their business and community safe by requiring vaccination as a condition of employment, with medical and religious exemptions.

It is incumbent upon all of us, but especially on elected officials, to lead by example and to do everything we can to keep Wisconsinites healthy and safe. I am vetoing AB 1 in its entirety because I object to the provisions in this bill that will make it more challenging to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in Wisconsin. Instead, AB 1 takes away existing tools available to public health officials and employers.

Moreover, what is especially unfortunate is that these provisions were added back into this piece of legislation late and well after an earlier version of this legislation was passed by the Wisconsin State Senate with bipartisan support. That earlier version of AB 1 was a good faith effort at finding common ground, and I was proud to work across the aisle with Majority Leader LeMahieu and Senate Republicans on a compromise that would be supported by both Republicans and Democrats. While that version did not contain every provision that each side would have liked, it would have nevertheless moved Wisconsin forward in addressing many critical issues, including flexibilities for unemployment benefits. Shortly after that version of AB 1 passed the Wisconsin State Senate on a bipartisan vote, I committed to signing that version of AB 1 and urged the Legislature to send it to my desk without delay. If that version of AB 1 was before me, I would be signing it today. Unfortunately, AB 1 as I am vetoing it represents a missed opportunity for meaningful compromise and the continued partisan obstruction that has plagued our state's response to this pandemic from the beginning.

As I have said all along, our response to the pandemic should be about doing what's best for people, not politics. It should be about following the science and public health experts. It should be about working together to save as many lives as we can. I remain committed to doing everything I can to keep Wisconsinites healthy and safe, following the science and advice of public health experts, and putting people first. I am hopeful members of the Legislature will choose to join me

in these essential efforts, and should they decide to be partners in our state’s response, I am ready and willing to welcome their participation and to work together to do what’s best for the people of our state.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 23: Prohibiting certain government officials from mandating vaccination against the 2019 novel coronavirus

On March 23, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 23 (as amended by Assembly Amendment 1) by a vote of 60 to 33, Paired 2, A.J. 3/23/21, p. 163.

On April 14, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 23 on a voice vote, S.J. 4/14/21, p. 260.

On April 23, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 23, A.J. 4/23/21, p. 250.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 23, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 23** in its entirety.

This bill, as amended, would prohibit the Department of Health Services from requiring individuals to receive a vaccine against the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus and any variant or mutation of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus. The bill would also prohibit local health officers from requiring individuals to receive a vaccine against the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus and any variant or mutation of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the provisions of the bill that would take away existing tools available to state and local public health officials during a declared public health emergency. As I said in my Assembly Bill 1 veto message and will reiterate again today, our response to this pandemic should be about following the science and public health experts and working together to save as many lives as we can, not finding ways to make it harder to fight this virus or keep Wisconsinites safe.

I remain committed to doing everything I can to keep Wisconsinites healthy and safe, following the science and advice of public health experts, and putting people first.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 24: Closure of and forbidding gatherings in places of worship

On March 23, 2021, the assembly adopted Assembly Substitute Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 24 on a voice vote, A.J. 3/23/21, p. 164, and passed Assembly Bill 24, as amended, by a vote of 61 to 33, Paired 2, A.J. 3/23/21, p. 164.

On April 14, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 24 on a voice vote, S.J. 4/14/21, p. 260.

On April 23, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 24, A.J. 4/23/21, p. 250.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 23, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 24** in its entirety.

This bill, as amended, would prohibit local health officers from taking any action to close or forbid gatherings in places of worship to control outbreaks and epidemics of the 2019 novel coronavirus or any variant or virus derived as a mutation of the 2019 novel coronavirus. The bill would also specify that the statutory language shall not be construed to confer any authority on a local health officer to close or restrict capacity in places of worship or any other entities.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the provisions of the bill that would take away existing tools available to state and local public health officials to prevent and suppress COVID-19. As I said in my Assembly Bill 1 veto message, our response to this pandemic should be about following the science and public health experts, not finding ways to make it harder to fight it. It should be about working together to save as many lives as we can.

I remain committed to doing everything I can to keep Wisconsin healthy and safe, following the science and advice of public health experts, and putting people first.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 59: Applications for the full-time open enrollment program in the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years and the family income requirement for the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program in the 2021-22 school year

On May 11, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 59 by a vote of 60 to 36, A.J. 5/11/21, p. 273.

On June 9, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 59 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 6/9/21, p. 354.

On June 18, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 59, A.J. 6/18/21, p. 395.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

June 18, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 59** in its entirety.

This bill increases the income eligibility threshold for the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP) for the 2021-22 school year to 300 percent of the federal poverty level; allows pupils to submit full-time open enrollment applications to more than three nonresident school districts in the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years; and prohibits a resident school board from denying an alternative open enrollment application in the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years if the application is made on the basis of best interest of the pupil. I am vetoing this bill because I object to its proposed changes to the WPCP and open enrollment processes for multiple reasons.

First, I object to diverting resources from school districts to private schools. While the bill authors present this bill as a temporary increase in the income threshold, students who participate in any choice program are not required to meet the income requirement in subsequent years of participation. Therefore, a one-time change in the WPCP income threshold has the potential for long-term financial impacts. Additionally, participation in the WPCP increased by over 30 percent in the 2019-20 school year and 25 percent in the 2020-21 school year with the 220 percent income threshold in place, indicating that the current income threshold does not prevent program growth.

Further, I am concerned that the implementation of these proposed changes to the WPCP would increase property taxes in some school districts. Currently, 297 school districts have the potential for increased property taxes as a result of resident students participating in the WPCP. The bill would exacerbate not only property tax increases but the incoherence of Wisconsin's current school funding system among public and private schools in the state.

Additionally, the bill is not timely as the application period for the WPCP for the 2021-22 school year ended on April 15, 2021, leaving no time for parents of newly eligible students to apply.

Moreover, the temporary changes to the open enrollment alternative application procedure reduce the local decision-making ability of school boards. Meanwhile, expanding the number of nonresident school districts a student may apply to in each open enrollment period may result in an increased administrative burden and uncertainty over which school district a student may end up attending.

Finally, in the 2020 open enrollment application period, only 11 of roughly 25,000 applicants were denied under the three school district limit, indicating the current is not as restrictive as portrayed. This is a bill that purports to address problems, but it unfortunately only creates more of them.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 86: Providing complementary and alternative health care practitioners with exemptions from practice protection laws, requirements and prohibitions for individuals who provide complementary and alternative health care services

On January 20, 2022, the assembly adopted Assembly Substitute Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 86 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/20/22, p. 673, and passed Assembly Bill 86, as amended, on a voice vote, A.J. 1/20/22, p. 673.

On January 25, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 86 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 1/25/22, p. 717.

On February 4, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 86, A.J. 2/7/22, p. 733.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

February 4, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly 86** in its entirety.

This bill would establish certain requirements and prohibitions for complementary and alternative health care (CAHC) practitioners; would provide exemptions for CAHC practitioners from prohibitions against acting without certain health-care-related licenses, certifications and other credentials if they comply with provisions in the bill; and would provide the Department of Safety and Professional Services with the authority to investigate and take action against a CAHC practitioner for violating a provision in the bill.

I have been a strong advocate of ensuring everyone has access to quality, affordable healthcare, whether it is ensuring we protect healthcare access for people with pre-existing conditions, expanding access to telehealth services in rural communities, or ensuring Wisconsinites can find healthcare treatment and services that are right for them. Equally important is ensuring patients and consumers are protected.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to altering current licensure standards in a way that would allow some practitioners to practice without the necessary training. Our medical licensure requirements exist to ensure that license holders possess the education and training necessary to safeguard the health and safety of their patients. This bill would devalue the level of competency required and could potentially endanger patients by exempting some individuals from needing to meet those same standards.

Moreover, I share concerns raised by the Wisconsin Council on Mental Health and the National Association of Social Workers that this bill would allow providers to perform psychotherapy and treat mental health disorders. Especially in the midst of the corona virus pandemic, investing in and expanding access to mental health services is critical; however, I have concerns about mental health services being provided to vulnerable Wisconsinites without the necessary training, which could have detrimental effects on individuals who might already be in crisis.

Access to healthcare—including mental healthcare—is critically important, and I welcome the opportunity to review legislation on this issue that addresses these concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 122: Micro education pods

On February 22, 2022, the assembly adopted Assembly Substitute Amendment 1 (as amended by Assembly Amendment 2) to Assembly Bill 122 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 799, and passed Assembly Bill 122, as amended, on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 799.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 122 on a voice vote, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 863.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 122, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 122** in its entirety.

This bill permits and defines a “micro education pod” as an educational program between two and ten family units and up to 20 children in a single location with a designated administrator. The ability to use micro education pods would sunset after the 2023–2024 school year.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating an entirely new type of largely unregulated educational structure. The bill would functionally create a new class of small private entities that would operate outside of the current laws applying to private schools and homeschooling, such as those relating to special education, employment, building codes, teacher licensing, and health and safety standards. Micro education pods would operate as mostly unregulated, small private schools with some components of homeschooling. More broadly, this bill is part of a series of efforts by this Legislature to politicize our schools and our education system while refusing to make meaningful, necessary investments in our kids and our schools. I welcome the opportunity to work together with the Legislature to do what’s best for our kids.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 152: Examination of building plans for public buildings, public structures, and places of employment, and examination of plumbing plans

On February 23, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 152 (as amended by Assembly Amendment 1) on a voice vote, A.J. 2/23/22, p. 827.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 152 on a voice vote, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 863.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 152, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 152** in its entirety.

This bill creates an exemption from the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Service’s examination requirement for certain building and plumbing plans and modifies other aspects of the building plan review process.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to passing unnecessary legislation that could ultimately compromise safety by undermining the department’s current process, which helps ensure public health and safety standards are met. Moreover, my administration has already successfully addressed the problem this bill seeks to solve. Three years ago, building and plumbing plan review times were taking much too long and negatively impacting building

constructions and renovations. As a result, my administration, and specifically the department’s secretary, took the initiative to find a way to reduce plan review time and successfully did so. Since taking these steps, plan review time has been reduced by about half; from 10 to 12 weeks to four to six weeks, on average. In fact, in 2020, most plan reviews were completed in three to five weeks. Therefore, what this legislation intends to do has already been accomplished without compromising safety.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 173: Private resources used for election administration, appointment of election officials

On May 11, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 173 (as amended by Assembly Amendment 2) by a vote of 60 to 36, A.J. 5/11/21, p. 277.

On June 9, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 173 by a vote of 18 to 14, S.J. 6/9/21, p. 354.

On June 30, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 173, A.J. 6/30/21, p. 387.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

June 30, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 173** in its entirety.

This bill would generally prohibit any county or municipality from applying for or accepting any non-governmental grants or donations for election administration. The bill would allow the Wisconsin Elections Commission to accept a private donation or grant intended for municipalities unless the grant stipulates specific purposes for use or contains a requirement to repay for any reason. The commission would have to distribute the funding to each municipality on a per capita basis to offset the municipality’s election administration expenses, with all receiving at least \$25, and only with the approval of the Joint Committee on Finance. Finally, the bill would create new requirements for serving as an election tabulator and new restrictions regarding who can serve as a poll worker.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to restrictions on local governments potentially using supplemental funding for election administration. During the coronavirus pandemic, our state and local election officials performed admirably to ensure the 2020 elections in each of our communities were conducted freely, fairly, and in accordance with our election laws. Counties, towns, villages, and cities across the state—both big and small, urban and rural—received non-governmental grants, which helped them conduct safe elections under extraordinary circumstances. In accordance with election laws, these resources were used to pay poll workers and purchase personal protective equipment and supplies, thereby keeping our elections safe for poll workers and voters alike.

Regardless of the source of additional funding for election administration, election administrators must always run elections according to state and federal law. Our election laws are robust and lay out clear procedures for how municipal and county officials must administer an election, a process that is not threatened by a municipality applying for and accepting additional resources. By generally prohibiting donations or grants, this bill unnecessarily restricts the use of resources that may be needed to ensure elections are administered effectively. Finally, the acceptance and expenditure of a grant would also be governed by statutory provisions that dictate how amendments to municipal budgets must be noticed and approved, thereby ensuring transparency for interested parties.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor of Wisconsin

Assembly Bill 191: Eliminating the personal property tax

On June 29, 2021, the assembly adopted Assembly Substitute Amendment 1 (as amended by Assembly Amendments 3 and 4) to Assembly Bill 191 on a voice vote, A.J. 6/29/21, p. 384, and passed Assembly Bill 191, as amended, by a vote of 64 to 34, 6/29/21, p. 385.

On June 30, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 191 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 6/30/21, p. 402.

On July 8, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 191, A.J. 7/8/21, p. 397.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

July 8, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 191** in its entirety.

The bill, as amended, would exempt from property taxation almost all property that is currently classified as personal property. Certain personal property related to buildings and other improvements on leased land would be assessed instead as real property. The result is that no items of personal property would be subject to the property tax beginning with tax assessments as of January 1, 2022. The bill, as amended, would also transfer from the general fund to the transportation fund \$20 million in fiscal year 2021–22 and \$44 million annually beginning in fiscal year 2022–23 to compensate the transportation fund for expected losses in railroad tax revenue. The bill is linked to a separate provision in the 2021–23 biennial budget, as amended by the Joint Committee on Finance, to provide aid payments to local governments to compensate those governments for the property tax revenues those local governments would lose under the exemption provided by the bill.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to the unusual and haphazard process by which the Legislature pursued the repeal of the personal property tax, which has created potential unintended consequences for railroad and utility taxes as well as the manufacturing and agriculture credit. While there were attempts in the amendments to the bill to address some of these problems, we need a more comprehensive approach. Most concerning is that the Legislature has not directly addressed the possible effect that this bill could have on the state's utility taxes. As presently drafted, the exemption of all personal property could potentially extend to the state's ad valorem utility taxes, which are based on the property values of utility property, inclusive of personal property owned by utility companies. Should this treatment be applied by the courts in order to adhere to the Wisconsin constitution's uniformity clause, the state could easily lose tens of millions in general fund tax revenue, if not more. Additionally, by not providing an immediate link between the compensating aid payments to local units of government and the exemption of personal property, the Legislature has created an unusual arrangement that is at odds with prior exemptions of personal property and such compensating aid.

I have left the funding intact in the budget because I welcome additional legislative action to meaningfully address the above issues. I call upon the Legislature to pass a new bill that comprehensively addresses the unintended impacts of this exemption and provides certainty and stability for local government aid.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 232: Assistance to households and property owners

On April 13, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 232 (as amended by Assembly Amendment 1) by a vote of 57 to 37, A.J. 4/13/21, p. 226.

On April 14, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 232 by a vote of 18 to 13, S.J. 4/14/21, p. 260.

On April 22, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 232, A.J. 4/23/21, p. 247.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 22, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 232** in its entirety.

This bill directs the Department of Revenue to coordinate with counties and municipalities to provide payments from the state's allocation of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) to property taxpayers equal to approximately

10 percent of the amount of the net property taxes levied on each taxpayer’s real property in 2020. The bill requires the Governor to allocate \$1,067,824,380 from the state allocation of the American Rescue Plan Act for these payments and an additional \$20,000,000 for administrative costs incurred by the Department of Revenue and local governments.

While I am interested in opportunities to provide meaningful property tax relief to Wisconsinites across our state, I am vetoing this bill for several reasons.

First, I object because the use of ARPA funds for the type of property tax relief proposed in this bill is almost certainly prohibited under the language of Section 9901 of ARPA, which specifies that federal funds allocated to a state under ARPA cannot be used to directly or indirectly offset any tax. This bill effectively creates a tax rebate, which is expressly prohibited under Section 9901. While the federal government has not issued final guidance regarding the prohibition of such tax relief payments, the plain language of ARPA prohibits the payments outlined in AB 232. If this bill is enacted and the funds spent as directed, the state may be required to repay over \$1 billion to the federal government.

Second, I object to the bill because it is poorly targeted. This bill disburses federal APRA funds as a 10 percent tax rebate to all property owners. It makes no payments to renters and makes no effort to link payments to impacts of the pandemic.

Third, I object to the bill 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.

In lieu of this bill, I will continue to utilize the authority provided to the Governor to oversee use of federal funds in a manner that is transparent and consistent with both Wisconsin’s needs and federal law. Using this authority, I have already announced my plans to invest the new federal funds under ARPA to various economic recovery and well–being, infrastructure, and pandemic response initiatives.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 233: Grants for small businesses

On April 13, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 233 by a vote of 57 to 37, A.J. 4/13/21, p. 226.

On April 14, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 233 by a vote of 19 to 12, S.J. 4/14/21, p. 260.

On April 22, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 233, A.J. 4/23/21, p. 247.

TEXT OF 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

Assembly Bill 234: Tourism industry grants

On April 13, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 234 by a vote of 56 to 37, A.J. 4/13/21, p. 227.

On April 14, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 234 by a vote of 18 to 13, S.J. 4/14/21, p. 260.

On April 22, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 234, A.J. 4/23/21, p. 247.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 22, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 234** in its entirety.

This bill requires the Department of Tourism to award \$50 million in grants from funds allocated to the state under the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021. Grants would be for nonprofit organizations that promote and develop tourism in the state, and would support the ability of these organizations to remain operational after COVID-19 pandemic challenges. This bill also requires the department to award \$25 million in grants from ARPA to organizations that own or operate amusement and theme parks to aid in their recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

I object to the 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.

In lieu of this bill, I will continue to utilize the authority provided to the Governor to oversee use of federal funds in a manner that is transparent and consistent with both Wisconsin's needs and federal law. Using this authority, I have already announced my intent to direct \$50 million of the new federal funds under ARPA to provide additional assistance to the tourism industry.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 235: Rural economic development

On April 13, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 235 by a vote of 57 to 36, A.J. 4/13/21, p. 228.

On April 14, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 235 by a vote of 18 to 13, S.J. 4/14/21, p. 260.

On April 22, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 235, A.J. 4/23/21, p. 248.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 22, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 235** in its entirety.

This bill requires the Governor to allocate \$100,000,000 of funds under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) for the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) and Department of Revenue (DOR) for rural economic development and farm support programs. I welcome support for our farmers, agricultural industries, and rural communities, which is why I previously called a special session of the Wisconsin State Legislature to address the pressing issues facing our state and to bolster rural prosperity. Unfortunately, none of those proposals ever reached my desk last session. The \$100,000,000 would be divided between \$50,000,000 to WEDC for various rural economic development programs, including entrepreneurial start-up efforts in rural counties, and \$50,000,000 for farm support grants administered by DOR in consultation with the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

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.

In lieu of this bill, I will continue to utilize the authority provided to the Governor under Section 16.54 of the Wisconsin Statutes to oversee use of federal funds and will allocate these funds in a manner that is transparent and consistent with both Wisconsin’s needs and federal law. Using this authority, I have announced that I will use ARPA funds to advance several economic assistance programs, including \$600 million in assistance to small businesses, which will benefit all regions of the state, including our rural communities and areas.

Further, I look forward to working with the Legislature to pass my budget proposal, which includes several initiatives which build on the proposals from my previously called special session as well as proposals supported by my Blue Ribbon Commission on Rural Prosperity.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 236: Payments to certain long-term care facilities and their staff

On April 13, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 236 by a vote of 58 to 37, A.J. 4/13/21, p. 229.

On April 14, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 236 by a vote of 19 to 12, S.J. 4/14/21, p. 261.

On April 22, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 236, A.J. 4/23/21, p. 248.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 22, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 236** in its entirety.

This bill requires the Governor to direct \$150 million from the moneys received under the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) for the Department of Health Services to distribute to nursing homes and assisted living facilities that apply for a onetime payment. To receive a payment, the nursing home or assisted living facility must ensure that no less than 50 percent of the payment provides bonuses to employees subject to limitations that ARPA has on payments to individuals. Further, payments to nursing homes and assisted living facilities may be used for purposes including capital projects and for assisting with integration into the statewide health information exchange system.

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.

In lieu of this bill, I will continue to utilize the authority provided to the Governor under Section 16.54 of the Wisconsin Statutes to oversee use of federal funds and will allocate these funds in a manner that is transparent and consistent with both Wisconsin's needs and federal law.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 237: Deposits into the unemployment reserve fund

On April 13, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 237 by a vote of 57 to 36, A.J. 4/13/21, p. 230.

On April 14, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 237 by a vote of 18 to 13, S.J. 4/14/21, p. 261.

On April 22, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 237, A.J. 4/23/21, p. 248.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 22, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 237** in its entirety.

This bill requires the Governor to deposit federal funding allocated through the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 into the unemployment insurance trust fund to maintain the lowest unemployment insurance tax rate schedule, as set forth in Wis. Stat. s. 108.18(3m)(d), in effect through the end of calendar year 2023.

I am vetoing this bill due to several objections. First, the use of ARPA funds outlined by this bill may be prohibited under the language of Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, which specifies that federal funds allocated to a state under ARPA cannot be used to directly or indirectly offset or reduce currently imposed taxes through a change in state law or regulations. While the federal government has not issued final guidance regarding this prohibition, implementing Assembly Bill 237 when it could be in violation of federal law may result in Wisconsin having to repay significant amounts of money to the federal government, and would unnecessarily jeopardize current or future federal funding for Wisconsin.

Second, I object to the bill's proposed limitations on 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.

In lieu of this bill, I will continue to utilize the authority provided to the Governor to oversee use of federal funds in a manner that is transparent and consistent with both Wisconsin's needs and federal law.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 238: Allocation of federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 funds for local highways and bridges

On April 13, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 238 by a vote of 57 to 37, A.J. 4/13/21, p. 230.

On April 14, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 238 by a vote of 18 to 13, S.J. 4/14/21, p. 261.

On April 22, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 238, A.J. 4/23/21, p. 249.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 22, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 238** in its entirety.

This bill requires the Governor to allocate \$308,519,800 of federal funds awarded to Wisconsin from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) to counties and municipalities for local road projects.

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.

Further, I am vetoing this bill because it is imprudent to restrict the use of funds to a purpose that may not comply with federal law. Specifically, the bill’s use of ARPA funds is not expressly authorized under ARPA and may, at best, be only a partially authorized use. While final guidance by the federal government has not yet been issued on the use of these funds, the bill’s allocation of more than \$300 million to uses that could be entirely or partially prohibited by the federal government means that the state may end up having to repay some portion of the bill’s expenditures to the federal government. This is an unnecessary risk.

In lieu of this bill, I will continue to utilize the authority provided to the Governor under Section 16.54 of the Wisconsin Statutes to oversee use of federal funds and will allocate these funds in a manner that is transparent and consistent with both Wisconsin’s needs and federal law.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 239: Use of certain federal funds for broadband expansion grants

On April 13, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 239 by a vote of 57 to 37, A.J. 4/13/21, p. 231.

On April 14, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 239 by a vote of 18 to 13, S.J. 4/14/21, p. 261.

On April 22, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 239, A.J. 4/23/21, p. 249.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 22, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 239** in its entirety.

This bill requires the Governor to allocate \$500,000,000 of the federal funds received by the state under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) to provide broadband expansion grants administered by the Public Service Commission (PSC). Under the bill, the commission would be required to award \$125,000,000 annually each calendar year between 2021 and 2024. The bill would also require the PSC to submit an annual report to the Joint Committee on Finance

no later than the September 1, following the completion of the fiscal year, that details the criteria used for evaluating and awarding grant applications, the recipients of the grants, and the commission's evaluation of the applications of grant recipients for grants awarded in the preceding fiscal year. I am vetoing this bill because I have several objections.

I object to the 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.

In lieu of this bill, I will continue to utilize the authority provided to the Governor under Section 16.54 of the Wisconsin Statutes to oversee use of federal funds and will allocate these funds in a manner that is transparent and consistent with both Wisconsin's needs and federal law. Using this authority, I have already announced my intent to direct a significant amount of the new federal funds under ARPA to provide for broadband expansion.

I am however pleased to see that the Legislature agrees with my call for robust investment in broadband expansion which I included in both my proposed 2021-23 biennial budget and in my announced plans for ARPA funds. I look forward to working with the Legislature to enact my proposed initiatives for broadband expansion and affordability in the biennial budget.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 240: Allocation of federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 funds for a statewide public safety interoperable communication system, emergency services IP network contracts, a geographic information systems database, and psychiatric treatment beds

On April 13, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 240 (as amended by Assembly Amendment 1) by a vote of 57 to 37, A.J. 4/13/21, p. 232.

On April 14, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 240 by a vote of 18 to 13, S.J. 4/14/21, p. 261.

On April 22, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 240, A.J. 4/23/21, p. 249.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 22, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 240** in its entirety.

This bill, as amended, clarifies the Department of Military Affairs' statutory responsibilities relating to the statewide interoperable communications system and allocates federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) funds to develop the system. The bill also allocates ARPA funds to Next Generation 9-1-1 to develop an emergency services Internet Protocol and a geographic information systems database and provides funding to a hospital in Eau Claire to expand the number of psychiatric beds. I am vetoing this bill because I have several objections.

I object because allocating funds as directed under this bill is not expressly authorized under ARPA and it may not be an allowable use of this federal funding. While final guidance by the federal government has not yet been issued on the use of these funds, the bill's allocation to uses that may be entirely or partially prohibited by the federal government means that the state could end up having to repay some portion of the bill's expenditures to the federal government. This is an unnecessary risk.

I also object to the bill because it limits the ability to use federal recovery 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.

In lieu of this bill, I will continue to utilize the authority provided to the Governor under Section 16.54 of the Wisconsin Statutes to oversee the use of federal funds, and I will allocate these funds in a manner that is transparent and consistent with both Wisconsin’s needs and federal law.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 241: Retiring public debt and transportation revenue bonds

On April 13, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 241 by a vote of 57 to 36, A.J. 4/13/21, p. 233.

On April 14, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 241 by a vote of 18 to 13, S.J. 4/14/21, p. 262.

On April 22, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 241, A.J. 4/23/21, p. 249.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 22, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 241** in its entirety.

This bill requires the Governor to use \$500,000,000 of federal funds from the state allocation of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) to pay down \$250,000,000 in transportation revenue bond debt and \$250,000,000 in general obligation debt or, if these uses not allowed by the American Rescue Plan Act, to pay for \$500,000,000 in building commission approved capital projects in lieu of bonding.

I object to this bill and am vetoing it because none of the uses for the ARPA funds outlined in this bill are expressly authorized under ARPA. While final guidance by the federal government has not yet been issued on the use of the funds, the bill’s allocation of \$500,000,000 to uses that could be prohibited or partially prohibited by the federal government means that the state may end up having to repay some, or possibly a large, portion of this \$500,000,000 to the federal government. This is an unnecessary risk.

I also object to the bill because it limits the ability to use federal funds with the flexibility necessary to confront the variety of challenges posed by the 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.

In lieu of this bill, I will continue to utilize the authority provided to the Governor under Section 16.54 of the Wisconsin Statutes to oversee use of federal funds and will allocate these funds in a manner that is transparent and consistent with both Wisconsin’s needs and federal law.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 243: Allocation of federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 funds for certain environmental purposes

On April 13, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 243 by a vote of 56 to 36, A.J. 4/13/21, p. 235.

On April 14, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 243 by a vote of 18 to 13, S.J. 4/14/21, p. 262.

On April 22, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 243, A.J. 4/23/21, p. 250.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 22, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 243** in its entirety.

This bill requires the Governor to allocate \$40,000,000 of the federal funds received by the state under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) to provide forgivable loans to municipalities under the safe drinking water loan program. Those forgivable loans could cover up to 50 percent of the costs of lead service line replacement on private property or be used to provide grants to private users of public water systems to cover up to 50 percent of the costs of lead service line replacement on private property. The bill would also:

- Require the Governor to allocate \$12,000,000 of the federal funds received by the state under ARPA for grants under the urban nonpoint source water pollution abatement and storm water management program.
- Require the Governor to allocate \$6,500,000 of the federal funds received by the state under ARPA for nonpoint pollution abatement under the targeted management runoff program.
- Require the Governor to allocate \$2,000,000 of the federal funds received by the state under ARPA to provide grants for the replacement or remediation of private wells under the well compensation grant program.
- Require the Governor to allocate \$500,000 of the federal funds received by the state under ARPA to establish a grant program to counties for well testing and public education about water quality. The grants could either fund up to \$10,000 per county to test and map privately owned wells or up to \$2,500 per county to provide information to well owners and the general public about the results of a well testing and mapping effort. Counties would have to provide matching funds and report the results of any testing to the University of Wisconsin—Stevens Point Center for Watershed Science and Education.

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 s. 16.54, 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 plans to invest the new federal funds under ARPA to various economic recovery and well-being, infrastructure, and pandemic response initiatives. I will continue to utilize the authority provided to the Governor to oversee use of federal funds in a manner that is transparent and consistent with both Wisconsin's needs and federal law.

At the same time, I am however pleased to see that the Legislature has adopted many of the environmental protection and pollution remediation provisions that were included in my proposed 2021-23 biennial budget, even if I disagree with the source of the funding that the Legislature has selected in this particular bill. I look forward to working with the Legislature to include many of these items in the upcoming biennial budget.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 293: Restrictions on enforcing federal laws regulating firearms, firearm accessories, and ammunition, the use of public resources to confiscate firearms

On June 9, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 293 by a vote of 61 to 36, A.J. 6/9/21, p. 321.

On June 23, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 293 on a voice vote, S.J. 6/23/21, p. 384.

On July 9, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 293, A.J. 7/9/21, p. 414.

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TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

July 9, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 293** in its entirety.

The bill would criminalize a person enforcing or attempting to enforce certain federal firearm laws and would require firearm manufacturers in this state to stamp “Made in Wisconsin” on firearms.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety for several reasons. First, this bill is not permitted by the United States Constitution. Under Article VI, the United States Constitution and the laws made pursuant to it are the “supreme law of the land,” and this bill purports to nullify the enforcement of federal law. I am also concerned that by giving citizens conflicting directives and criminalizing noncompliance, this bill may also violate citizens’ due process rights. Additionally, I object to the confusion that the bill could cause among the public and law enforcement officers, which could pose a detriment to public and community safety.

When I called a special session of the Legislature on gun safety in October 2019, I stressed that Wisconsinites desperately want their elected leaders to take action on gun safety and support having meaningful, thoughtful dialogue about common-sense solutions that will both respect and uphold rights while keeping our communities safe. These goals are not mutually exclusive, and I welcome constructive conversations to that end.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

**Assembly Bill 299: Prohibiting proof of vaccination for COVID–19
as a condition of receiving business and government services**

On June 16, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 299 by a vote of 60 to 37, A.J. 6/16/21, p. 346.

On February 15, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 299 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 2/15/22, p. 770.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 299, A.J. 4/15/22, p. 931.

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TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 299** in its entirety.

This bill would prohibit any governmental entity from requiring a person to provide proof that the person has received a vaccine against the SARS–CoV–2 coronavirus in order to receive any services, conduct any business, access any building, or participate in any government function. In addition, this bill would prohibit any person, firm, partnership, corporation, association, or other legal entity, including a nonprofit organization, engaged in any enterprise in this state from requiring a person to provide proof that the person has received a vaccine against the SARS–CoV–2 coronavirus in order to receive any services, conduct any business, access any building or participate in any non–private function.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature’s continued efforts to inject partisan politics and rhetoric into public health practices by preventing public entities and businesses from making decisions that work for them, their customers, their workers, and their operations to help prevent and suppress the spread of COVID–19. As I previously said in my veto messages for Assembly Bill 1 and Assembly Bill 23, respectively, our response to this pandemic should be focused on following the science and the advice of public health experts and working together to save as many lives as we can—not on finding ways to make it harder to fight this virus or keep Wisconsinites healthy and safe. Private entities and businesses should remain free to implement COVID–19 mitigation measures to keep themselves, employees, and customers safe without unnecessary, political interference from this Legislature.

I remain committed to doing everything I can to keep Wisconsinites healthy and safe, by following the science and the advice of public health experts and putting people first.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 316: Prohibiting discrimination based on whether the person has received a COVID-19 vaccine

On January 25, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 316 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/25/22, p. 687.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 316 on a voice vote, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 863.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 316, A.J. 4/15/22, p. 931.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 316** in its entirety.

This bill would prohibit any governmental entity from “discriminating” against a person based on whether the person has received a vaccine against the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus. The bill does not define discrimination.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature’s continued efforts to inject partisan politics and rhetoric into public health practices by preventing public entities from working to help prevent and suppress the spread of COVID-19. As I have previously said on countless occasions, government response to this and future pandemics should be focused on following the science and the advice of public health experts to keep Wisconsinites healthy and safe. This should not be subject to the unnecessary, politically driven interference by this Legislature.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 336: Participation in federal unemployment benefit programs and work search requirements for unemployment insurance

On June 9, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 336 by a vote of 60 to 37, A.J. 6/9/21, p. 321.

On June 9, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 336 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 6/9/21, p. 355.

On June 29, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 336, A.J. 6/30/21, p. 386.

On July 27, 2021, the assembly refused to pass Assembly Bill 336, notwithstanding the objections of the governor, by a vote of 59 to 37, A.J. 7/27/21, p. 431.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

June 29, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 336** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Department of Workforce Development to terminate participation in federal unemployment insurance programs that provide supplemental benefits in addition to regular unemployment insurance benefits, including: pandemic unemployment assistance, pandemic emergency unemployment compensation, federal

pandemic unemployment compensation, and mixed earner unemployment compensation. This bill would also prohibit the department from waiving work search requirements for any reason related to COVID-19, the COVID-19 pandemic, or a public emergency related to COVID-19.

I am vetoing this bill for two reasons. First, I object to the interference and encroachment by the Legislature on the executive branch’s constitutional and statutory authority to administer programs and policies, in this case, the unemployment insurance program.

Second, I am vetoing the bill because it would eliminate economic assistance for individuals whose employers or occupations have been most adversely affected by the pandemic. There is a lack of evidence to support the notion that eliminating supplemental unemployment insurance benefits would bring more individuals into the workforce. Many of the most hard-hit areas are located in both rural parts of the state that had slower pre-pandemic job growth as well as urban areas with job sectors such as hospitality or tourism that had to adapt to profound changes in business operations. Eliminating this lifeline for many Wisconsinites will cause continued economic hardships for those impacted the most by the pandemic and create additional hurdles for individuals to return to family-sustaining jobs. As a result, the entire state economy likely would be negatively affected. The Legislature needs to confront issues surrounding childcare, wages, and workplace COVID-19 safety for those returning to the workforce. Eliminating the supplemental federal benefits while simultaneously failing to address systemic problems faced by individuals remaining in and returning to the workforce is irresponsible.

Finally, with the enhanced benefits still in place, Wisconsin’s labor force participation rate is higher than the national rate and the state’s unemployment rate has nearly returned to pre-pandemic levels—3.9 percent—which is nearly two full points lower than the national average and among the best in the country. Wisconsinites are hard-working people, and these numbers demonstrate as much. I am opposed to changes that would have such a profound effect on our neighbors who are struggling the most.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor of Wisconsin

Assembly Bill 367: Loan related to the Verso Paper Mill in the city of Wisconsin Rapids and loan related to the Park Falls Pulp and Paper Mill in the city of Park Falls

On June 22, 2021, the assembly adopted Assembly Substitute Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 367 on a voice vote, A.J. 6/22/21, p. 370, and passed Assembly Bill 367, as amended, by a vote of 63 to 35, A.J. 6/22/21, p. 370.

On June 30, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 367 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 6/30/21, p. 403.

On July 8, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 367, A.J. 7/8/21, p. 397.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

July 8, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 367** in its entirety.

The bill, as amended, would require the Governor to allocate \$65,000,000 in federal funds received under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) for loans to be made by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) to finance the purchases of the Verso Paper Mill in the city of Wisconsin Rapids and the Park Falls Pulp and Paper Mill in the city of Park Falls, allocating \$50 million for the Verso Paper Mill and \$15 million for the Park Falls Pulp and Paper Mill, respectively. The bill also specifies terms and conditions regarding the loans, including a requirement that WEDC acquire a security interest in the properties.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to using ARPA funding for this purpose when the state has sufficient GPR funding to support the project and ARPA is not a reliable funding source to provide the long-term assistance needed to revive these mills and provide stable jobs to their workers. First, it is not clear that the U.S. Department of Treasury will permit ARPA funds to be used for this purpose. Treasury’s Interim Final Rule governing ARPA eligibility requires that assist-

ance provided to businesses must respond to the negative economic impacts of COVID-19. Because many mills were experiencing significant financial difficulties prior to the COVID-19 pandemic as a result of long-term economic and industrial trends in this sector, the federal government may view the assistance as insufficiently tied to the impacts of the pandemic. Second, ARPA funds are only available for use through December 31, 2024, limiting their flexibility for the type of long-term loans needed by potential purchasers of the mills.

If a project was legislatively mandated and later deemed ineligible, the state would have to return the funds to the federal government. It is inappropriate to use a funding source that presents such risks and challenges when the state is in a strong financial position, sufficient GPR is available, and using state resources would provide greater flexibility on agreement terms and lower risk to the state. I previously called a special session of the Legislature to act on legislation that would have allowed us to invest \$1 billion into economic development projects and initiatives across our state. Republicans gavelled out of that special session without deliberation or debate. Shortly thereafter, this bill was introduced, and I worked with the WEDC, legislators from both parties, local elected officials, and workers to reach a bipartisan agreement to amend Assembly Bill 367 and reach a solution without potentially jeopardizing state support for the mills or federal funds. Unfortunately, that amendment was not adopted.

I support efforts to provide reliable, long-term relief to Wisconsin's vital paper industry and the workers at the Wisconsin Rapids and Park Falls mills. My administration has and will continue to work with local stakeholders to support these efforts. I put forward a bipartisan agreement providing an alternative funding mechanism for this relief that is realistic and can provide the communities a path forward, and I would welcome the Legislature to present legislation consistent with those conversations. Following my action on the state budget, there is ample state funding available for this and other priorities of the state.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 369: Timeline for local redistricting in Wisconsin following the 2020 federal decennial census

On June 16, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 369 by a vote of 59 to 38, A.J. 6/16/21, p. 346.

On June 23, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 369 by a vote of 18 to 12, S.J. 6/23/21, p. 384.

On July 9, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 369, A.J. 7/9/21, p. 414.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

July 9, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 369** in its entirety.

This bill would require county and municipal governments to delay redrawing county supervisory district plans and ward boundaries until after the 2022 spring election cycle. The bill would require city aldermanic plans to first apply in the 2023 spring primary and election and final county supervisory district plans to first apply in the 2024 spring primary and election.

The bill attempts to address a concern that counties will not be able to meet the deadline by which they must submit their tentative county supervisory district plans, which under current law is July 1. Under normal circumstances, counties would have already received the U.S. Census Bureau data upon which the new supervisory district plans will be based, which would give them at least two months to draw tentative district plans before the deadline. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, local units of government are not likely to receive this data until sometime in August.

I am vetoing this bill, however, because I object to the way it seeks to address this issue. In attempting to solve one problem, the bill creates a larger one. The bill creates too great of a delay in creating the new maps. This will result in malapportioned maps that do not accurately reflect current populations, which violates the constitutional principle of one person, one vote. I will not support legislation that deprives people of their voice in the democratic process. There were ways to address the census data delay that would not risk malapportioned maps. The bill could have waived the July 1 deadline and made other changes to help municipalities expedite their redistricting efforts.

Instead of encouraging counties and municipalities to create new accurate and fair maps as soon as possible following the release of forthcoming census data, this bill would result in local elections occurring for one or two more years under old district lines that were created as part of the same process which resulted in some of the most gerrymandered congressional and legislative seats in the country. To deny Wisconsinites from having lawfully reapportioned local districts, even temporarily, is unjust and undemocratic.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 383: School district membership in an interscholastic athletic association in the 2021–22 school year

On June 22, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 383 by a vote of 60 to 38, A.J. 6/22/21, p. 365.

On June 23, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 383, S.J. 6/23/21, p. 384.

On July 8, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 383, A.J. 7/8/21, p. 395.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

July 8, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 383** in its entirety.

This bill would prohibit a school district from participating in an interscholastic association, such as the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association, unless the interscholastic association adopts rules that consider the method of instruction used in the 2020–21 and 2021–22 school years as a valid extenuating circumstance that justifies transferring schools and allows pupils full participation for all grade levels.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature’s insertion into the decision–making process of a private, member–driven organization.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor of Wisconsin

Assembly Bill 407: Creating a Legislative Human Resources Office

On June 29, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 407 (as amended by Assembly Amendment 1) on a voice vote, A.J. 6/29/21, p. 384.

On June 30, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 407, S.J. 6/30/21, p. 403.

On July 8, 2021, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 407, A.J. 7/8/21, p. 397.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

July 8, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 407** in its entirety.

This bill creates a Legislative Human Resources Office as a nonpartisan legislative service agency, with positions in the unclassified service of the state civil service system and headed by a director. Additionally, the bill seeks to shield the office’s records from the public records law by requiring the office to “at all times observe the confidential nature of records, requests, advice, complaints, reviews, investigations, disciplinary actions and other information in its possession relating to human resources matters.”

I am vetoing this bill because I object to creating a blanket exemption for the legislature’s personnel records. The public can often only learn about misconduct through public records requests, including requests for personnel records. The people of Wisconsin have a right to know about misconduct by public officials and employees, including those in the legislature. Further, this provision is unnecessary. Current law already gives record custodians ample flexibility to protect sensitive information contained in personnel records, such as the names or other information that could be relied on to infer the identity of a victim or whistleblower.

While I would support a clean bill that establishes a Legislative Office of Human Resources, I cannot support a bill that would be used to hide official misconduct from public scrutiny. The people of Wisconsin deserve more transparency, not less.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 411: Anti-racism and anti-sexism pupil instruction and anti-racism and anti-sexism training for employees of school districts and independent charter schools

On September 28, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 411 (as amended by Assembly Amendment 1) by a vote of 60 to 38, A.J. 9/28/21, p. 479.

On January 25, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 411 by a vote of 20 to 13, S.J. 1/25/22, p. 717.

On February 4, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 411, A.J. 2/7/22, p. 733.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

February 4, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 411** in its entirety.

This bill would prohibit school districts and independent, publicly-funded charter schools from providing instruction on a wide variety of subjects centered around race and sex discrimination. The bill would also prohibit school boards and charter school operators from requiring school staff to attend training on providing instruction on these topics. Additionally, under the bill, the Department of Public Instruction would be required to withhold 10 percent of a district’s state aid distribution if they determine the school is providing instruction or training on these topics. Further, the bill would create a private legal enforcement action, allowing individuals to sue a district or school for alleged violations of the bill.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating new censorship rules that restrict schools and educators from teaching honest, complete facts about important historical topics like the Civil War and civil rights. I have said before and will restate again today that I trust parents, educators, and schools to work together to do what is best for our kids—work they have long been doing without the political interference and micromanagement from politicians in Madison. Our kids deserve to learn in an atmosphere conducive to learning without being subjected to state legislative encroachment that is neither needed nor warranted. Moreover, we have worked hard to provide increased support for our kids and our schools after a decade’s worth of cuts to education. This work has helped our state return to having the 8th best pre-K–12 education system in the country after dropping to 17th in 2017. There is no question that the aid we are providing our schools is much better spent on our kids learning in our classrooms than on the onslaught of attorney fees, lawsuits, and legal bills that could befall them because of this legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

**Assembly Bill 414: Anti-racism and anti-sexism training
for employees of state government and local government**

On September 28, 2021, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 414 by a vote of 60 to 38, A.J. 9/28/21, p. 479.

On February 22, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 414 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 812.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 414, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 414** in its entirety.

The bill would require the Departments of Revenue and Administration, respectively, to potentially withhold state funding from any local or state government agency if that agency requires employees to attend training relating to any number of concepts prescribed in the bill.

I am vetoing the bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature attempting to infringe upon the executive branch of state government, especially under cover of politically motivated claims and erroneous assumptions for which the Legislature has no meaningful basis.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 440: Butane extraction of resin from marijuana plants

On January 20, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 440 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/20/22, p. 667.

On January 25, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 440 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 1/25/22, p. 718.

On February 4, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 440, A.J. 2/7/22, p. 734.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

February 4, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 440** in its entirety.

This bill would create a separate penalty for manufacturing marijuana or separating resin from marijuana by butane extraction or a similar method and would create a graduated penalty structure for marijuana possession if the form is a resin produced through butane extraction.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating additional criminal offenses or penalties related to marijuana use.

In recent years, we have seen state after state reform marijuana prohibitions, from decriminalization to legalizing medical marijuana to legalizing recreational use. According to a 2019 Marquette Law School poll, nearly 60 percent of Wisconsinites believe the time has come for us to legalize recreational marijuana. I agree with them, and my 2021–23 budget proposed to do just that. Additionally, I proposed using a part of the expected revenue from marijuana legalization for a community reinvestment fund to support programs to invest in the communities that have too often borne the cost of marijuana criminalization.

It is widely accepted, and, indeed, research over the course of the last decade confirms, that marijuana criminalization has had a disproportionate impact on communities of color, especially in Wisconsin where we have longstanding racial

disparities in incarceration rates. For example, according to a report released by the American Civil Liberties Union in 2020, Wisconsin ranks among the worst in the country for racial disparities in arrests for marijuana possession. Similarly, while national arrest rates for marijuana possession overall have declined over the last decade, Wisconsin has trended in the opposite direction, with marijuana possession arrests increasing more than 12 percent from 2010 to 2018. Moreover, that same study showed Black people are 4.2 times more likely to be arrested in Wisconsin for marijuana possession than their white counterparts despite comparable national rates of use.

Marijuana possession and manufacturing/delivery, regardless of the form, is currently illegal in Wisconsin. The bill would create a new sentencing disparity for marijuana resin. Under the bill, a second or subsequent offense of possessing or attempting to possess resin would have escalating penalties depending on the amount involved. If it involves more than 50 grams, about 1.76 ounces, it would be a Class E felony. But under current law, a similar repeat offense for tetrahydrocannabinols—regardless of the amount—is a Class I felony. This bill represents a continuation of past policies and paradigms we know have had detrimental effects on people, families, and communities across our state while also creating a new sentencing disparity for marijuana resin.

States across our country—both Democrat and Republican—controlled alike—have and are taking meaningful steps to address increased incarceration rates and reduce racial disparities by investing in substance use treatment, community reentry programming, alternatives to incarceration, rehabilitation, and other data-driven, evidence-based practices we know are essential solutions to reforming our justice system. The data and the science are clear on this issue, and I welcome the Legislature to start having meaningful conversations around justice reform in Wisconsin.

As former Governor Tommy Thompson has said in recent years, “I’ve also come to believe that our corrections system and incarceration practices are both financially unsustainable and provide questionable outcomes worthy of strenuous review.” I agree. And this bill would simply be another step in the wrong direction.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

**Assembly Bill 446: Reading readiness assessments and allocating
federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 funding**

On February 22, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 446 (as amended by Assembly Amendments 1 and 3) on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 812.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 446 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 863.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 446, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

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TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 446** in its entirety.

The bill would mandate school boards and independent charter schools to assess the early literacy skill of pupils in four-year-old kindergarten to second grade using screening assessments throughout the year and to create a personal reading plan for each pupil in five-year-old kindergarten to second grade who is identified as at-risk. It would also require the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to establish and maintain lists of approved fundamental skills screening assessments, universal screening assessments, and diagnostic assessments on its Internet site based on alignment with model academic standards in reading and language arts, and a mandatory minimum sensitivity rate and specificity rate. Further, this bill would mandate a school board, for each school and district, or operator of an independent charter, to annually submit a report to DPI regarding the number of pupils identified as at-risk, the names of reading assessments used, and the number of pupils in five-year-old kindergarten to second grade who receive literacy interventions, all information which the department would then annually compile and report to the Legislature. The amended bill requires the use of at least \$5,000,000 in one-time American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 federal funding to implement its new mandates for screenings and interventions or to address staffing or other resource needs necessary for implementation.

When I vetoed the Senate version of this bill, SB 454, I raised concerns about the need for long-term sustainable funding. Wisconsin is projected to have a \$3.8 billion surplus at the end of the 2021–23 biennium—nearly \$2.9 billion more than was expected in June 2021—while the state’s ‘rainy day’ fund now sits at the highest level in state history. Instead of amending the bill to utilize state dollars and ensure ongoing funding, the bill was amended to require the use of already allocated one-time federal funds. I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I continue to object to overhauling Wisconsin’s reading readiness system for assessment and intervention without evidence that the proposed approach is best suited to our students, without long-term, sustainable funding.

As I stated previously, we need to address reading proficiency and increase literacy success in our schools, particularly after the challenges our kids, parents, and schools faced during the pandemic. A bill that will ultimately lead to reducing valuable instruction time and asks schools to rely on one-time money for long-term expenses fails to provide the necessary and meaningful investments our kids and our schools deserve.

As I advocated for as Superintendent of Public Instruction, and have proposed as Governor is that we need to provide the necessary funding to support the work of our educators, administrators, and staff currently doing the work with our kids to ensure reading and literacy success.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

**Assembly Bill 495: Possession of a firearm in a vehicle on school grounds
by a person with a license to carry a concealed weapon**

On January 20, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 495 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/20/22, p. 668.

On February 15, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 495 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 2/15/22, p. 771.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 495, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 495** in its entirety.

This bill would weaken current conceal carry weapon license regulations establishing gun-free school zones by allowing, under certain circumstances, a concealed carry weapon licensee to possess a loaded firearm on school grounds.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating another exception to the gun-free school zone law. Wisconsin’s gun-free school zone law passed with strong bipartisan support and was signed into law by Governor Thompson in 1991. Wisconsinites desperately want their elected leaders to take action to find common-sense solutions that both respect and uphold rights and ensure our schools, our streets, and our communities are safe. To that end, I have been proud to invest more than \$100 million into violence and crime prevention and efforts to support local and tribal public safety agencies.

By contrast, this bill neither improves public safety nor addresses gun violence in our state by allowing for an increased presence of firearms—including loaded firearms—on school grounds. This could only further endanger our kids and make our schools less safe.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 518: Reciprocity for out-of-state licenses to carry a concealed weapon

On January 20, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 518 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/20/22, p. 669.

On February 15, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 518 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/15/22, p. 771.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 518, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 518** in its entirety.

This bill would expand conceal carry reciprocity by allowing an out-of-state resident with authorization issued by any other state to carry a concealed weapon in Wisconsin. Currently, the Wisconsin Department of Justice maintains a reciprocity list that outlines those states whose permits are honored in Wisconsin. Other states' permits are only honored if they require as part of the license, or designate that the holder chose to submit to, a background search comparable to the type of background check required for Wisconsin licenses. This bill removes the requirement that the issuing state is on this list.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to letting non-residents carry concealed weapons in our state without having met the same criteria as Wisconsin residents. The department's background check process serves a critical public safety function. This bill would risk public safety by allowing out-of-state residents to enter our state, carry concealed weapons, and avoid the same background check process that a Wisconsin licensee must undergo.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 569: Law enforcement investigative services

On February 23, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 569 (as amended by Assembly Amendment 1) by a vote of 62 to 34, Paired 2, A.J. 2/23/22, p. 832.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 569 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 864.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 569, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 569** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Wisconsin Department of Corrections to reimburse local units of government for law enforcement investigative services provided for incidents involving persons in the care of the department. The legislature voted to remove the funding necessary to support this legislation before sending it to my desk.

I support reimbursing local units of government for law enforcement investigative services. That is why I included language in my 2021-23 executive budget to reimburse local units of government for law enforcement investigative services and provided funding to make such reimbursements. That budget provision was rejected by the Legislature's Joint Committee on Finance on a party-line vote. My administration's support is also among the reasons why the Department of Corrections originally provided written testimony in support of this bill.

Unfortunately, an amendment during the legislative process removed the funding behind this proposal. I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature's failure to provide the necessary resources for implementation, creating an unfunded mandate, when the state has ample resources available to support this effort.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**Assembly Bill 597: Possession of a firearm by a licensee in a place of worship
located on the grounds of a private school**

On January 20, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 597 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/20/22, p. 670.
On March 08, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 597 on a voice vote, S.J. 3/8/22. p. 864.
On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 597, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 597** in its entirety.

This bill would allow an individual licensed to carry a concealed weapon to possess a firearm in a place of worship that is located on the same grounds as a private school.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating another exception to the gun-free school zone law. Wisconsin’s gun-free school zone law passed with strong bipartisan support and was signed into law by Governor Thompson in 1991. Wisconsinites desperately want their elected leaders to take action to find common-sense solutions that both respect and uphold rights and ensure our schools, our streets, and our communities are safe. To that end, I have been proud to invest more than \$100 million into violence and crime prevention and efforts to support local and tribal public safety agencies.

By contrast, this bill neither improves public safety nor addresses gun violence in our state by allowing for an increased presence of firearms—including loaded firearms—on school grounds. This could only further endanger our kids and make our schools less safe.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

Assembly Bill 643: Selection of architects and engineers for state projects

On February 23, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 643 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/23/22, p. 835.
On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 643 on a voice vote, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 864.
On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 643, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 643** in its entirety.

This bill would specify that a Department of Administration construction project selection committee may not refuse an architect or engineer for a construction project costing less than \$7,400,000 simply because the architect or engineer operates a firm with only one architect or engineer.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to removing requirements designed to protect the state, and in turn, its taxpayers. It is prudent for the state to require that firms wishing to complete large and expensive building projects

have a second architect or engineer in the event that the first architect is ill, injured, or otherwise unable to complete the project on time. The state has an obligation to protect taxpayer dollars, especially when it comes to multimillion-dollar building projects; it is therefore reasonable to require that if a firm wishes to take part in a building project for the state, the firm must either have a second architect or engineer, as the project warrants, or partner with another architect or engineer to give the state necessary assurance of coverage.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 675: Natural immunity to COVID–19 in lieu of proof of vaccination or test

On January 25, 2022, the assembly adopted Assembly Substitute Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 675 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/25/22, p. 690, and passed Assembly Bill 675, as amended, by a vote of 59 to 34, A.J. 1/25/22, p. 691.

On February 15, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 675 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1) by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 2/15/22, p. 771.

On February 15, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Amendment 1 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/15/22, p. 837.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 675, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 675** in its entirety.

This bill would mandate that employers requiring proof of vaccine against COVID–19 must accept documentation demonstrating natural immunity against the SARS–CoV–2 coronavirus (COVID–19) in lieu of proof of vaccination or regular testing.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to preventing employers from making decisions that are informed by science and public health to help combat the spread of COVID–19. The COVID–19 vaccine remains the most effective tool we have to prevent serious illness, hospitalizations, and death.

Private entities and businesses should remain free to implement COVID–19 mitigation measures to keep themselves, their workers, and customers safe without the Legislature’s political interference.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 776: Damage or graffiti to certain historical property

On January 25, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 776 by a vote of 59 to 33, A.J. 1/25/22, p. 692.

On February 15, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 776 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/15/22, p. 772.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 776, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 776** in its entirety.

Under current law, it is a Class I felony to damage or graffiti property if the damage exceeds \$2,500 or to damage certain property on state-owned land. This bill further specifies in state law that any damage or graffiti to certain property or to a structure, plaque, statue, painting, or other monument of commemorative or historical significance that is maintained by any state, county, or municipality or that is located on publicly owned land would also result in a Class I felony.

I am vetoing this bill because the behavior this bill purports to address is already prohibited and punishable under current law. It is already a Class A misdemeanor to commit these acts if the damage is less than \$2,500. An individual who commits these acts and causes damage valued at over \$2,500 is already punishable with a Class I felony under current Wisconsin state law. Thus, current law already ensures individuals who engage in this behavior can be held accountable.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 777: Grants to political subdivisions for additional policing and strategic planning to combat crime and grants for beat patrol and specialized officers

On January 25, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 777 (as amended by Assembly Amendment 1) by a vote of 59 to 33, A.J. 1/25/22, p. 693.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 777 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 865.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 777, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 777** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Governor to allocate \$10,000,000 of federal funds awarded to Wisconsin from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) to political subdivisions for costs associated with policing. Any grant program would have to be approved by a legislative committee, which would also have the authority to modify it.

My administration and I have, thankfully, not waited for Legislative direction to begin this important work. Last fall, I announced my administration would be making a \$45 million investment in ensuring safer communities through violence prevention and support for crime victims. Additionally, I recently announced more than \$50 million into efforts to address reckless driving, support evidence-based crime prevention strategies, and alleviate justice system backlogs.

To date, I have been proud to invest more than \$100 million into violence and crime prevention and efforts to promote public safety in communities across our state. Among that \$100 million includes a program to invest nearly \$19 million into providing funding to local and tribal law enforcement agencies in Wisconsin. This will enable these public safety agencies to address the unique needs facing their communities, including training, recruitment bonuses, community policing needs, and technology investments. The determination of an agency’s amount is a formula based on the population served and includes a violent crime add-on for locations where violent crime exceeds the statewide average.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature’s effort to limit the state’s ability to use federal funds and also because my administration has already been using federal aid to invest in violence prevention and crime prevention and community safety efforts, including supporting costs associated with public safety efforts. Additionally, in Wisconsin, it remains the role of the Governor to oversee the use of federal funds under Section 16.54 of the Wisconsin State Statutes, which has been established and reaffirmed on several occasions.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 824: Battery of a corrections employee by a person in custody

On January 25, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 824 by a vote of 58 to 34, A.J. 1/25/22, p. 693.

On February 22, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 824 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 812.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 824, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 824** in its entirety.

This bill would create a five-year penalty enhancer for a battery to a Department of Corrections employee by a person in custody. This bill would also require that any sentence imposed pursuant to this bill must run consecutively, rather than concurrently, to any sentence the person is already serving.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because the conduct this bill purportedly seeks to address is already prohibited and punishable under current law and judges already have the discretion to impose a sentence consecutively rather than concurrently. More specifically, current law already outlines increased penalties for batteries committed under specific circumstances, including currently existing increased penalties if committed by a person in our care at a correctional institution, or if the victim is a probation agent, extended supervision agent, parole agent, community supervision agent, aftercare agent, or a nurse.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 827: Multiple acts of theft committed in concert

On January 25, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 827 (as amended by Assembly Amendment 1) by a vote of 59 to 33, A.J. 1/25/22, p. 694.

On February 22, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 827 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 813.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 827, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 827** in its entirety.

This bill would mandatorily aggregate the value of property for the purposes of determining a penalty for theft and retail theft if committed by three or more individuals, at the same time, in the same place, and in concert.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to adding duplicative provisions to our criminal code as there are already state laws addressing orchestrated theft. Our criminal code already provides for the aggregation of the value of stolen property where multiple acts of theft are prosecuted as a single count, as well as party to a crime and conspiracy.

Republican and Democrat-controlled states alike have been leading efforts to reform the justice system by using data-driven, evidence-based practices to inform decisions that help keep our communities safe. Unfortunately, the Wisconsin State Legislature persists in working to push our state in the opposite direction. I welcome the opportunity to have meaningful conversations about holding offenders accountable while implementing strategies that can keep our kids, our families, and our communities safe. I remain hopeful the Legislature will join me in this important work.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

Assembly Bill 828: Additional compensation and recruitment and retention benefits for correctional officers, youth counselors, and psychiatric care technicians

On January 25, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 828 by a vote of 59 to 33, A.J. 1/25/22, p. 695.

On February 22, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 828 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 813.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 828, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 828** in its entirety.

The bill requires the Governor to allocate sufficient funds received under section 602 of the federal Social Security Act, as amended by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021, to the Department of Corrections and the Department of Health Services for additional compensation for correctional officers, youth counselors, and psychiatric care technicians. The bill requires the Department of Corrections to provide an additional \$2 per hour to correctional officers and youth counselors during calendar year 2022 and \$5 per hour during calendar year 2023. The bill also requires the Department of Health Services to provide an additional \$2 per hour to psychiatric care technicians during calendar year 2022 and \$5 per hour during calendar year 2023. The hourly wage increases would not be cumulative. Under the bill, the pay increases are not permanent and would be rescinded when ARPA funding is no longer available. The bill also requires the Governor to allocate these ARPA funds to both agencies that may then use them to provide recruitment and retention benefits, including, but not limited to, overtime compensation, sign-on bonuses, and longevity bonuses, to employees in these classifications.

I am vetoing the bill because I object to mandating the use of additional one-time federal funds without taking into account the other needed investments of federal dollars, most importantly our ongoing work to respond to and recover from the pandemic. My administration has already prioritized funds to provide a much-deserved add-on to our correctional workers while ensuring sufficient funding for our ongoing efforts. While this add-on is funded through a combination of federal funds under ARPA and existing agency budgets during the current fiscal biennium, it is the intent of the administration to make these pay increases permanent with readily available state resources, beginning in the 2023-25 biennial budget. The majority of these funds have already been allocated to assist Wisconsinites with the recovery from the Coronavirus pandemic. This bill would require that federal funds be redirected from the public health response, broadband, or tourism grants.

Furthermore, the 2021-23 compensation plan and companion bill proposed by the Division of Personnel Management within the Department of Administration provided additional state funding for compensation for correctional officers, youth counselors, and psychiatric care technicians which are critical for employee recruitment and retention, as well as to ensure safety inside of our institutions. This proposal from my administration funded these pay increases on a permanent basis using a small portion of the largest general fund balance in the history of our state. Unfortunately, the Joint Committee on Employment Relations chose to play politics, reject this proposal, and instead authorized a smaller and unfunded pay increase that is insufficient in solving this workforce crisis.

In favoring one-time ARPA funds instead of state funds, the Legislature is not offering a meaningful solution to this ongoing problem. Rescinding the increases after certain ARPA funds are no longer available will create even more significant recruitment and retention issues. Responsibly compensating our correctional officers, youth counselors, and psychiatric technicians is an important and ongoing state cost. The state holds the largest general fund balance in the history of the state and our budget stabilization fund is at its highest level ever. We have ample state resources available to make these important investments, and I welcome the Legislature to join me by supporting this effort in my next biennial budget.

Respectfully submitted,
 TONY EVERS
 Governor

Assembly Bill 829: Mandatory minimum sentence for three or more convictions for retail theft

On January 25, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 829 by a vote of 58 to 34, A.J. 1/25/22, p. 695.

On February 22, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 829 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1) on a voice vote, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 813.

On February 23, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Amendment 1 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/23/22, p. 865.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 829, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 829** in its entirety.

This bill would create a 180–day mandatory minimum sentence for a person convicted of a third offense of retail theft, which includes theft of services, within five years.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to restricting the discretion of judges to address the circumstances of the violation before them. Republican and Democrat–controlled states alike have been leading efforts to reform the justice system by using data–driven, evidence–based practices to inform decisions that help keep our communities safe. I welcome the opportunity to have meaningful conversations about holding offenders accountable while implementing strategies that can keep our kids, our families, and our communities safe. I remain hopeful the Legislature will join me in this important work.

Respectfully submitted,
 TONY EVERS
 Governor

Assembly Bill 831: A law enforcement marketing campaign

On January 25, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 831 by a vote of 59 to 33, A.J. 1/25/22, p. 696.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 831 on a voice vote, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 866.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 831, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 831** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Governor to allocate \$1,000,000 of federal funds awarded to Wisconsin from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) for a marketing campaign designed to recruit and retain law enforcement officers, including the recruitment of out–of–state law enforcement officers from communities in other states that have sought to reduce funding for law enforcement.

My administration and I have, thankfully, not waited for Legislative direction to begin this important work. Last fall, I announced my administration would be making a \$45 million investment in ensuring safer communities through violence

prevention and support for crime victims. Additionally, I recently announced more than \$50 million into efforts to address reckless driving, support evidence-based crime prevention strategies, and alleviate justice system backlogs.

To date, I have been proud to invest more than \$100 million into violence and crime prevention and efforts to promote public safety in communities across our state. Among that \$100 million includes a program to invest nearly \$19 million into providing funding to local and tribal law enforcement agencies in Wisconsin. This will enable these public safety agencies to address the unique needs facing their communities, including training, recruitment bonuses, community policing needs, and technology investments. The determination of an agency's amount is a formula based on the population served and includes a violent crime add-on for locations where violent crime exceeds the statewide average. Additionally, among that \$100 million investment was also \$1 million for the Wisconsin Technical College System to establish part-time police academies to help address our state's public safety workforce challenges. These investments also do not include the \$130 million I have directed toward finding innovative, long-term, and community-based solutions to addressing our state's longstanding challenges retaining and bringing talented workers.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature's effort to limit the state's ability to use federal funds and because my administration has been using ARPA federal aid to invest in violence prevention and crime prevention and community safety efforts. In Wisconsin, it is the role of the Governor to oversee the use of federal funds under Section 16.54 of the Wisconsin State Statutes, which is established, has been in place for decades, and was reaffirmed by legislative leadership in a letter sent to me in April 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 832: Increasing the law enforcement training reimbursement

On January 25, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 832 by a vote of 59 to 33, A.J. 1/25/22, p. 696.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 832 by a vote of 19 to 12, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 866.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 832, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 832** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Law Enforcement Standards Board to reimburse certain individual preparatory training expenses and agency recertification training expenses. These reimbursement programs would end on December 31, 2024, and would be funded by requiring the Governor to allocate federal funds from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA).

To date, I have been proud to invest more than \$100 million into violence and crime prevention and efforts to promote public safety in communities across our state. Among that \$100 million includes a program to invest nearly \$19 million into providing funding to local and tribal law enforcement agencies in Wisconsin. This will enable these public safety agencies to address the unique needs facing their communities, including training, recruitment bonuses, community policing needs, and technology investments. The determination of an agency's amount is a formula based on the population served and includes a violent crime add-on for locations where violent crime exceeds the statewide average.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature's effort to limit the state's ability to use federal funds and because my administration has been using ARPA federal aid to make meaningful investments in violence prevention and crime prevention and community safety efforts. The Governor of Wisconsin is charged with overseeing the use of federal funds under Section 16.54 of the Wisconsin State Statutes, which is clearly established, has been in place for decades, and was reaffirmed by legislative leadership in a letter sent to me in April 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 834: No–knock search warrants and certain expenditures of federal moneys by first class cities

On January 25, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 834 by a vote of 58 to 34, A.J. 1/25/22, p. 697.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 834 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 866.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 834, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 834** in its entirety.

This bill would create a statutory standard for executing “no–knock” search warrants, preempt local authorities from adopting policies that conflict with that standard, and place certain requirements on how first–class cities spend their distribution of Local Fiscal Recovery Funds from the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA).

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature imposing onerous restrictions on first–class cities to use federal funds with the flexibility necessary to confront the variety of challenges posed by recovery from the coronavirus pandemic. Local governments and local elected officials are well–positioned to make informed decisions about what is best for their communities and how to meet the needs of the people they serve and represent without unnecessary political interference and micromanagement by the Legislature. I once again welcome the Legislature to make meaningful investments in tangible solutions like increasing County and Municipal Aid so that communities can more readily increase support for public safety services across our state. Moreover, I recently signed 2021 Wisconsin Act 183 into law, which requires the Department of Justice to collect certain information on no–knock entries in the execution of search warrants, which is a necessary step to further understanding this issue.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 836: Technical college police academy programs

On January 25, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 836 by a vote of 59 to 33, A.J. 1/25/22, p. 698.

On February 22, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 836 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 814.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 836, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 836** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Wisconsin Technical College System Board to work with local technical college district boards to establish two part–time police academies and would require that the Governor allocate \$1 million in fiscal year 2022–23 from discretionary federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object on the grounds that the Wisconsin Technical College System and Board expressed concerns about two provisions in this bill that went unaddressed through the legislative process and requested additional flexibility to implement this program effectively. To that end, on March 15, 2022, I announced \$1 million for the Wisconsin Technical College System to establish part–time police academies with that requested flexibility. We allow our technical colleges to be responsive to workforce needs in creating these academies so they can continue to be a critical partner in addressing our state’s workforce challenges.

Finally, it remains the role of the Governor to oversee the use of federal funds under Section 16.54 of the Wisconsin State Statutes.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 883: Various changes to unemployment law and workforce development

On February 17, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 883 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/17/22, p. 777.

On February 22, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 883 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 814.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 883, A.J. 4/15/22, p. 931.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 883** in its entirety.

This bill would make several changes to the unemployment insurance program, including: (a) changing the name of the program to "reemployment assistance;" (b) creating additional qualifying requirements to receive benefits, particularly as they relate to work searches for claimants unemployed for over three weeks; (c) requiring the Department of Workforce Development to promulgate rules immediately for drug testing certain unemployment insurance beneficiaries; (d) requiring the department to continue participating in the federal Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment program; (e) modifying the weekly wage threshold (at which point unemployment insurance benefits are prorated) from \$30 in any benefit week to \$30 or 40 percent of the claimant's benefit week rate (whichever is greater); (f) requiring the Governor to provide American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 funding for \$1,000 payments to employers that hire long-term unemployment benefit recipients who lost jobs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; (g) making technical changes regarding state plans submitted pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, and (h) requiring the department to report, twice each year, to the appropriate standing committees of the Legislature, an analysis of unemployment benefit claimants' employment outcomes.

During the coronavirus pandemic, individuals and families across our state relied on unemployment benefits to make ends meet. Now, Wisconsin has returned to work. Our state's unemployment rate is at historic lows, and we have the fewest number of people unemployed ever in our state's history. I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating more burdensome requirements for employers while adding more barriers for individuals applying for and receiving economic assistance through programs largely designed to provide support when individuals and families are experiencing economic hardship.

Moreover, the Department of Workforce Development is already performing much of the work this bill purports to newly require or support. The department already helps employers find available workers and provides job services, training, and employment assistance to workers and individuals seeking to join our workforce. For example, "reemployment assistance" is effectively already the function of the Division of Employment and Training's Bureau of Job Service, which supports the mobile career lab, works in schools and libraries to connect available workers with jobs, supports Department of Corrections' job labs, and various other in-person and online efforts to support workers and connect available workers with employers. They also already administer the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment program, which helps approximately 20,000 to 25,000 unemployment insurance claimants a year with conducting work searches, employment counseling and career exploration, and referrals to job training programs. Work registration and reemployment services are already required.

The Legislature might well have been informed about these existing responsibilities, programs, and requirements had this legislation been developed through the Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council's agreed-upon bill process or in consultation with the Council and the Department.

Respectfully submitted,
 TONY EVERS
 Governor

Assembly Bill 884: Courses satisfying University of Wisconsin System core general education requirements

On February 22, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 884 by a vote of 60 to 34, Paired 2, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 804.

On February 22, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 884 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 814.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 884, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 884** in its entirety.

This bill would mandate the University of Wisconsin System (System) to accept a course in the U.S. Constitution or the Bill of Rights to satisfy diversity or ethnic studies required for core general education courses.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature's continued efforts to politicize our higher education institutions, sow division on our campuses, and micromanage the University of Wisconsin System and Board of Regents. This Legislature must stop using our students as political pawns. Educators should be able to teach honest, complete facts about important historical topics and events, and our students deserve to learn in atmospheres conducive to learning without being subjected to political interference by the Legislature.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS
 Governor

Assembly Bill 885: Eliminating immunity for public campus administrators from liability for violations of individual expressive rights under the declaration of rights in the Wisconsin Constitution

On February 22, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 885 by a vote of 60 to 34, Paired 2, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 805.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 885 on a voice vote, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 867.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 885, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 885** in its entirety.

This bill eliminates statutory immunity for University of Wisconsin System ("System") or Wisconsin Technical College System ("WTCS") district board campus administrators from liability for violations of certain individual expressive rights on system or technical college campuses. The bill allows for the recovery of reasonable attorney fees and costs by a prevailing plaintiff.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because the System already has policies and practices in place reflecting its obligations under the extensive body of caselaw defining First Amendment rights and exceptions and providing protections and remedies in case of a violation. According to the System, no case has been brought forward in Wisconsin in which a System or WTCS district employee was found to have violated the expressive rights of another individual under the state

constitution. This demonstrates first and foremost how seriously Wisconsin’s higher education institutions already take academic freedom and freedom of expression. It also underscores that existing state law and policies already sufficiently address the concerns this bill raises.

This legislation, like several bills before me, represents yet another attempt by this Legislature to politicize our campuses and higher education institutions. Our students and our world-class higher education institutions would be much better suited if this Legislature instead meaningfully considered efforts to invest in students and education at every level, and I welcome the opportunity to engage in this important conversation and do what’s best for our kids.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 888: Talent attraction and retention initiatives focusing on veterans

On February 17, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 888 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/17/22, p. 777.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 888 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 867.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 888, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 888** in its entirety.

The bill would require the Governor to allocate \$10 million in federal funding received under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) to fund talent attraction and retention initiatives focusing on veterans. The bill also requires WEDC to expend those funds allocated by the Governor for this purpose.

My administration has been working diligently to make meaningful investments in our workforce, including support for our veterans in our workforce. I announced in July 2021 an investment of \$130 million into solutions to help address our state’s long-term workforce challenges. This investment included \$100 million to develop innovative, community-based solutions to supporting our workforce, apprenticeship, and work training, \$20 million toward subsidizing employment and skills training for individuals who are unemployed, and \$10 million to help connect workers with available jobs. Today, much of this investment has already been awarded to important projects and efforts in every corner of our state.

We have also worked to provide additional federal funds to invest in veteran-owned businesses and their economic recovery through the Diverse Business Assistance Grant Program. This program, which I created to assist small businesses in communities disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, provided, among other investments, nearly \$5 million toward the Wisconsin Veterans Chamber of Commerce and CRC Employment and Entrepreneurial Services—both organizations that serve veterans and veteran-owned businesses by providing educational programming, computer literacy, technical assistance, and other benefits for new business owners.

I also recently announced over half a million dollars in grants to 14 registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that provide financial assistance, entrepreneurship training, or other services to Wisconsin veterans and their families. Since starting in 2015, the WDVA’s grant programs have awarded more than \$1.7 million in funding to organizations that have a goal of ensuring Wisconsin veterans and their families are properly cared for, and more than \$2.2 million in funding to non-profit organizations that provide entrepreneurship or technical, business, or other assistance to veteran entrepreneurs to improve employment outcomes.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature attempting to limit the state’s ability to use federal funds. It is the governor’s role to oversee the use of federal funds under Wisconsin State Statutes Section 16.54.

I remain committed to the work my administration has already been doing to ensure our veterans have the resources and support they deserve. I recently announced Blue Ribbon Commission on Veteran Opportunity will examine issues related to veteran employment and training, among other topics supporting veteran success. As Wisconsin’s economic recovery

from the pandemic continues, my administration remains committed to further efforts aimed at strengthening businesses and our workforce. We will continue our effort to bolster collaboration with Wisconsin's veterans, strengthen the network of veterans organizations working to provide care and assistance, and find long-term solutions to support our state's and our country's heroes and the challenges they face—both those that existed before the pandemic and others that worsened because of it.

Respectfully submitted,
 TONY EVERS
 Governor

Assembly Bill 903: Programs for gifted and talented pupils

On February 22, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 903 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 805.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 903 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 867.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 903, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 903** in its entirety.

This bill requires school boards to annually submit a report to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) on the presence of a gifted and talented program coordinator and their time worked on gifted and talented programming, the number of gifted and talented pupils that received gifted and talented services, demographics for each pupil, and any other information requested by DPI. Under the bill, DPI must annually report on its website for each school district (1) the number of pupils evaluated to determine if they are a gifted and talented pupil; (2) the number of pupils identified as gifted and talented pupils; (3) the number of pupils who received gifted and talented program services (unless doing so would jeopardize confidentiality) and pupil demographics; (4) DPI's determination of whether or not the school district complied with the state's gifted and talented law; (5) the services and activities provided to gifted and talented pupils under a gifted and talented program; and (6) whether the school district employs a gifted and talented program coordinator and if so the amount of time that person spends on the district's gifted and talented program. Further, DPI must include on its website the statewide pupil participation rate in advanced placement courses, and for any entity receiving.

Further, the bill adds to the Department of Workforce Development's teacher training grant program a purpose area to award grants for professional development for teachers serving gifted and talented pupils. Along with the other annual reporting responsibilities added by this bill, DPI would also have to compile and publish on its website the services and activities provided by such grant recipients to gifted and talented pupils. Further, the bill would require DPI to audit for compliance at least 10 percent of school districts selected at random, in addition to including information on compliance with gifted and talented requirements on school report cards.

We have worked diligently over the course of the last three years to make meaningful investments in our kids and our schools after a decade's worth of cuts to education, returning our state to having the 8th best pre-K-12 education system in the country after dropping to 17th just five years ago. I also support the gifted and talented pupil program. For example, in my first biennial budget, I proposed more than \$1.5 million over the 2019-2021 biennium to support gifted and talented education. The Legislature removed that investment from my budget.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to this Legislature's failure to increase investments in an already underfunded program while simultaneously adding new mandates without the sustainable, long-term funding necessary for implementation. Wisconsin, even after doubling the amount of gifted and talented funding in the current biennium, still provides far less to gifted and talented programming compared to neighboring states. This bill does not address this concern, and instead, potentially exacerbates it.

Respectfully submitted,
 TONY EVERS
 Governor

Assembly Bill 912: Emergency power to regulate businesses

On February 17, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 912 by a vote of 59 to 35, Paired 2, A.J. 2/17/22, p. 777.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 912 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 867.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 912, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 912** in its entirety.

This bill limits the use of emergency powers during emergencies.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature potentially preventing small businesses from receiving targeted relief and resources designed specifically to support small, family-owned businesses during an economic emergency, and I object to potentially having to use economic relief programs designed for small, family-owned, and main street businesses to support big box corporations.

Economic crises often have disproportionate effects on small, main street businesses compared to larger corporations and big businesses. To this end, a state’s immediate economic relief and recovery efforts must make intentional and targeted investments to support local main streets and economies that otherwise might not be able to leverage economic resources to the same extent as large, corporate counterparts. See, for example, my administration’s “We’re All In” small business grant program announced in May 2020 to respond to the coronavirus pandemic, which was funded through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act. Our program invested \$75 million in the early days of the pandemic to provide \$2,500 in cash grants to help businesses with cost interruptions or health and safety improvements, paying worker salaries and wages, rent and mortgages, and inventory. These grants were critically important in helping small businesses across our state and were specifically targeted to go to small businesses with 20 or fewer employees.

Investing specifically in Wisconsin small businesses has been a central focus of our economic relief and recovery efforts during a state of emergency. The “We’re All In” grant program referenced above was just one of many I have implemented to specifically provide targeted resources and assistance in response to this economic crisis. In fact, my administration has been proud to be a national leader in the share of the federal aid we have directed to economic development and small business support. An analysis conducted in November 2021 found Wisconsin ranked second in the country for aid we have directed to economic development and first in the country in aid, we have allocated to businesses. During this pandemic, we have helped more than 100,000 small businesses, including helping more than 3,400 small businesses open up storefronts in all 72 counties. Clearly, many of these programs were directed to help small businesses, not big box corporations.

This bill would have potentially forced us to reduce or even eliminate altogether some of the economic support programs we ultimately devoted to our small businesses, instead requiring us to provide the same economic support to big-box corporations as well—no matter how big they are or how much money they have—to the significant detriment of Wisconsin’s small businesses that desperately needed our help. Under this bill, any future state action relating to an emergency must be applied to all businesses uniformly, which could prevent the state from responding to an emergency by providing targeted resources to specifically help small businesses without necessarily providing those same resources to big box corporations, too.

I am concerned that, under this bill, the state would not be able to implement future economic relief and support programs designed to help small businesses without having to provide the same support to big businesses and corporations that likely do not need that same support as main street businesses in an economic crisis. We prioritized using our federal pandemic aid to go to small businesses rather than big-box businesses and corporations in recognition of the fact that most small businesses do not have the economic reserves, resources, and leverage big businesses and corporations do that are necessary to weather and survive economic turbulence.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

**Assembly Bill 932: Requiring certain efforts to expand and promote
the apprenticeship and youth apprenticeship programs**

On February 17, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 932 by a vote of 60 to 34, A.J. 2/17/22, p. 779.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 932 by a vote of 19 to 11, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 868.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 932, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 932** in its entirety.

This bill would mandate the Governor to provide at least \$20 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to the Department of Workforce Development for the purpose of promoting apprenticeship programs to school districts with low or no apprenticeship program participation, increasing approved apprenticeship programs, and funding apprenticeship completion awards.

I welcome the opportunity to invest in, promote, and expand youth apprenticeship programs in our state. The 2019–21 biennial budget I signed included \$10 million to invest in local youth apprenticeship grants over the biennium. With changes made through the 2021–23 biennial budget I signed in July 2021 we added an additional \$1 million annually to invest \$12 million into youth apprenticeship grants across our state over this biennium.

Moreover, while our unemployment rate has rebounded to even better than pre-pandemic levels and continues to be at historic lows, our state has long faced workforce challenges that preceded the coronavirus pandemic. Wisconsin has always been proud of our high workforce participation rates—Wisconsinites are hard workers by nature. We have had the fewest number of people unemployed ever in our state's history as people across our state have returned to work. At the same time, we also know we need to find meaningful, long-term solutions to train our talented workers and bring more workers to our state.

My administration and I have, thankfully, not waited for Legislative direction to begin this important work. In fact, I was proud to announce an investment of more than six times what the Legislature is proposing here. In July 2021, I announced I would be investing \$130 million into solutions to help address our state's long-term workforce challenges. This investment included \$100 million to develop innovative, community-based solutions to supporting our workforce, apprenticeship, and work training, \$20 million toward subsidizing employment and skills training to individuals who are unemployed, and \$10 million to help connect workers with available jobs. Today, much of this investment has already been awarded to important projects and efforts in every corner of our state.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature's effort to limit the state's ability to use federal funds. In Wisconsin, it is the role of the Governor to oversee the use of federal funds under Section 16.54 of the Wisconsin State Statutes, which is clearly established, has been in place for decades, and was reaffirmed by legislative leadership in a letter sent to me in April 2020. Moreover, as outlined above, Wisconsin has long been leading on this issue by making these critical, significant investments without the Legislature's direction.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

**Assembly Bill 934: Disenrollment of ineligible individuals from and redeterminations of eligibility for the
Medical Assistance program and database confirmation for public assistance program eligibility**

On February 17, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 934 (as amended by Assembly Amendment 1) by a vote of 59 to 35, Paired 2, A.J. 2/17/22, p. 779.

On February 22, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 934 by a vote of 20 to 13, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 814.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 934, A.J. 4/15/22, p. 931.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 934** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Department of Health Services to promptly remove ineligible individuals from the Medicaid program, prohibit the department from automatically renewing individuals’ Medicaid eligibility, require the department to redetermine individuals’ Medicaid eligibility every six months, and would prohibit the use of prepopulated forms (except recipient or applicant name and address). In addition, the department would be required to enter into data-sharing agreements for the purpose of confirming eligibility for public assistance programs.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating requirements that conflict with federal law. States are already required to renew Medicaid eligibility at least every 12 months and not more than every 12 months and are required to complete administrative renewals whenever possible. In the event the state cannot make a renewal determination on its own or complete an administrative renewal, the state is required to send a pre-printed renewal form to the individual. Additionally, the department is prohibited under federal law from terminating eligibility based on information received directly from data exchanges.

I also object to this bill creating an eligibility condition for the Medicaid program that is more stringent than what is currently allowed under federal law. Unless a state receives explicit authority from the federal government to impose other eligibility rules—which Wisconsin does not have, and it remains unclear whether such a waiver request to the federal government would be approved—individuals who otherwise meet existing eligibility criteria are entitled to these program benefits under federal law.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 935: FoodShare work and FoodShare employment and training requirements and drug testing

On February 17, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 935 by a vote of 58 to 34, Paired 4, A.J. 2/17/22, p. 780.

On February 22, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 935 by a vote of Ayes 21 to 12, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 815.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 935, A.J. 4/15/22, p. 931.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 935** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Department of Health Services to reinstate work requirements for able-bodied adults without dependents and the employment and training program for able-bodied adults; withdraw any FoodShare waivers altering work requirements; and implement a drug screening, testing, and treatment policy for individuals enrolled in the FoodShare Employment and Training Program.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to adding more barriers for individuals applying for and receiving food security and economic assistance through programs largely designed to provide support when individuals and families are experiencing economic hardship.

Additionally, I also object to creating a situation in which the state and the Department of Health Services could be out of compliance with federal law. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act, which was passed and enacted under the Trump Administration, requires that able-bodied adults without dependents not be subject to various eligibility restrictions during

the public health emergency, effectively removing previously accrued time-limited benefit months and restarting benefits for able-bodied adults at zero months. Rescinding the related state's waiver would put the state out of compliance with this federal requirement.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 936: Failure to accept employment to remain eligible for Medical Assistance

On February 17, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 936 (as amended by Assembly Amendment 1) by a vote of 59 to 33, Paired 4, A.J. 2/17/22, p. 780.

On February 22, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 936 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 815.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 936, A.J. 4/15/22, p. 931.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 936** in its entirety.

Under this bill, an able-bodied adult without dependents in the Medicaid program who fails to accept a job offer or increase in paid work hours would be ineligible for those benefits for six months.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to this bill creating an eligibility condition for the Medicaid program that is more stringent than what is currently allowed under federal law. Unless a state receives explicit authority from the federal government to impose other eligibility rules—which Wisconsin does not have, and it remains unclear whether such a waiver request to the federal government would be approved—individuals who otherwise meet existing eligibility criteria are entitled to these program benefits under federal law.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 937: The amount of benefits received under the unemployment insurance law

On February 17, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 937 by a vote of 57 to 35, Paired 4, A.J. 2/17/22, p. 781.

On February 22, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 937 by a vote of 19 to 14, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 815.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 937, A.J. 4/15/22, p. 932.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 937** in its entirety.

This bill would limit the total number of weeks a claimant who loses their job through no fault of their own would be eligible to receive unemployment benefits based on the state's previous seasonally adjusted unemployment rate. Currently, eligibility for regular unemployment insurance benefits is a maximum of 26 weeks. Under the bill, the maximum number of weeks that a claimant would be eligible for benefits could be as many as 26 if the state's unemployment rate is greater than 9 percent or as few as 14 if the state's unemployment rate is less than or equal to 3.5 percent, with a range

of benefit weeks tied to unemployment rates in between. The bill does not modify supplemental or extended unemployment benefit provisions (which also are tied to the state’s unemployment rate). The unemployment rate used to determine the benefit week eligibility for claimants beginning to receive benefits in the first half of a calendar year would be the third quarter of the previous calendar year. For claimants beginning to receive benefits after June 30 of a calendar year, the unemployment rate from the first quarter of that same calendar year would apply.

During the coronavirus pandemic, individuals and families across our state relied on unemployment benefits to make ends meet. Now, Wisconsin has returned to work. Our state’s unemployment rate is at historic lows, and we have the fewest number of people unemployed ever in our state’s history. I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to adding more barriers for individuals applying for and receiving economic assistance through programs largely designed to provide support when individuals and families are experiencing economic hardship.

Additionally, under this legislation, the number of weeks an individual who lost their job through no fault of their own would be eligible to receive benefits would be determined based on historical and potentially outdated unemployment rates. Under this bill, for example, for an individual applying for unemployment insurance benefits on or after January 1, the number of weeks for which that person would be eligible to receive benefits would be based on the average unemployment rate of July, August, and September of the preceding year. Similarly, for an individual applying for unemployment insurance benefits on or after July 1, the number of weeks for which that person would be eligible would be based on the average unemployment rate of January, February, and March earlier that year.

This bill fails to meaningfully contemplate—much less be responsive to—timely, immediate economic needs precipitated by an economic crisis. Considering the economic turbulence caused by the coronavirus pandemic, for example, might have proved illuminating, even instructive, to the Legislature in the course of developing this legislation. In April 2020, Wisconsin’s unemployment rate was 14.8 percent. If this bill had been enacted before this pandemic, the number of weeks for which an April 2020 claimant would have been eligible to receive would have been based on the unemployment rate for the third quarter of 2019—when there was no pandemic, no economic crisis existed, and the unemployment rate was 3.1 percent. This defies logic.

The Legislature might well have been informed about these issues had this legislation been developed through the Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council’s agreed-upon bill process or in consultation with the Council and the Department.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 938: Changes to unemployment insurance law, audit of federal unemployment benefits, and transfers of employees to the Department of Workforce Development

On February 17, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 938 by a vote of 59 to 33, Paired 4, A.J. 2/17/22, p. 782.

On February 22, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 938 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 816.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 938, A.J. 4/15/22, p. 932.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 938** in its entirety.

This bill would make several modifications to the unemployment insurance laws. Specifically, the bill provides that whenever unemployment benefits are augmented by congressional or executive action—that is, for example, many of the enhanced federal unemployment benefits that provided additional economic support during the coronavirus pandemic—they must be approved by the Legislature’s Joint Finance Committee. The bill also dramatically expands the definition of employee misconduct. The bill would impose upon nonresident claimants a requirement to register with their local job center after receiving the first week of benefits from Wisconsin. The Department of Workforce Development would have to verify that such claimants have completed this registration, as well as audit 50 percent of all work

search actions reported by all claimants in the state. The bill further would require the department to provide information about the unemployment insurance system to both individuals and employers and enhance identity verification (compliant with National Institute of Standards Digital Identity Guidelines IAL2 and AAL2), among other provisions.

During the coronavirus pandemic, individuals and families across our state relied on unemployment benefits to make ends meet. Now, Wisconsin has returned to work. Our state's unemployment rate is at historic lows, and we have the fewest number of people unemployed ever in our state's history. I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to adding more barriers for individuals applying for and receiving economic assistance through programs largely designed to provide support when individuals and families are experiencing economic hardship. Additionally, I also object to the Legislature's unnecessary interference in future unemployment benefit augmentations. Unfortunately, this state has already experienced firsthand what happens when the Legislature delays and refuses to act expeditiously in the face of overwhelming need—in 2020, Wisconsin lost out on \$25 million in federal funding to help support unemployment benefits because the Legislature failed to act quickly. This legislation only enables this same mistake to occur again in the future by requiring Joint Finance Committee review. By way of further example, had this bill been enacted during this pandemic as the state was implementing the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation benefit program, the two-week delay to accommodate the Joint Finance Committee's passive review period alone would have resulted in an estimated more than \$360 million in lost funds. Legislative inaction on future benefit augmentations could needlessly delay and potentially even jeopardize economic support to Wisconsinites during times of great economic need and uncertainty.

Moreover, the Department of Workforce Development has launched a modernized call center, offers significant reemployment services, and has substantial eligibility requirements and fraud prevention mechanisms. The Legislature might well have been informed about these processes and existing requirements had this legislation been developed through the Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council's agreed-upon bill process or in consultation with the Council and the Department.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 939: Various changes to the unemployment insurance law

On February 17, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 939 by a vote of 58 to 34, Paired 4, A.J. 2/17/22, p. 782.

On February 22, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 939 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 816.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 939, A.J. 4/15/22, p. 932.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 939** in its entirety.

This bill would make various changes to the unemployment insurance law. Wisconsin businesses and employers are an essential part of the success of our unemployment system and are already required to submit information to the Department of Workforce Development. The Department would also be required to create online reporting mechanisms for employers' increased reporting requirements. This bill requires employers to "provide a full and prompt response" for benefit claims as to eligibility questions and report to the Department regarding various conduct of a job applicant. The bill specifies that the first such report regarding an individual should be disregarded for purposes of determining unemployment benefit eligibility if the claimant can demonstrate good cause for any failure to interview or accept a job offer. Generally, though, reports under the bill would render an individual ineligible for benefits during a benefit week. The Department would be required to investigate each report and provide the results of such investigations and actions taken to the Unemployment Insurance Council and the appropriate standing committees of the Legislature. The bill also adds duplicative requirements, which are largely already provided for under current law.

During the coronavirus pandemic, individuals and families across our state relied on unemployment benefits to make ends meet. Now, Wisconsin has returned to work. Our state's unemployment rate is at historic lows, and we have the

fewest number of people unemployed ever in our state’s history. I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to adding more barriers for individuals applying for and receiving economic assistance through programs largely designed to provide support when individuals and families are experiencing economic hardship. Moreover, state law already has protections in place to prevent the types of fraudulent activity this bill purports to prevent. Under current law, unemployment claimants must already be able and available for work, must actively look for work and provide documentation for completing four work search actions per week, and must report weekly whether they have refused job offers or job referrals. Failure to comply with these requirements could result in the ending of benefits, overpayments, or additional penalties. The Legislature might well have been informed about these existing requirements had this legislation been developed through the Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council’s agreed-upon bill process or in consultation with the Council and the Department.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 940: Implementation of talent attraction and retention initiatives

On February 17, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 940 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/17/22, p. 782.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 940 by a vote of 20 to 11, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 869.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 940, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 940** in its entirety.

The bill would require the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) to submit within 30 days a plan to the Legislature’s Joint Committee on Finance describing in detail how the WEDC intends to make expenditures required under 2021 Wisconsin Act 58—the 2021–23 biennial budget—using funds approved for talent attraction and retention initiatives.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to the Legislature’s unnecessary interference in the WEDC’s administration of talent attraction and retention initiatives.

The Legislature crafted the very provision in the 2021–23 biennial budget relating to talent attraction and retention not even one year ago now, having seemingly determined the WEDC could implement those initiatives without being micro-managed by the Legislature. The WEDC fully intends to meet its requirements under 2021 Wisconsin Act 58 to expend at least \$3 million on talent attraction and retention initiatives during the 2021–23 biennium.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 941: A commercial driver recruitment program

On February 17, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 941 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/17/22, p. 783.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 941 on a voice vote, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 869.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 941, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 941** in its entirety.

The bill would require the Governor to allocate federal funding received under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to the Department of Transportation to create three programs to increase the number of people with commercial driver licenses.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to limiting the state's ability to use federal funds with the flexibility necessary to confront the variety of challenges posed by the recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and to respond to Wisconsin's changing needs. More specifically, it is the role of the Governor in Wisconsin to oversee federal fund use under Section 16.54 of the Wisconsin State Statutes, which is clearly established, has been in place for decades, and reaffirmed by legislative leaders in an April 2020 letter.

Additionally, I am also vetoing this bill because I object to locating a workforce development program within the Department of Transportation. The bill's proposed programs are outside the scope of the Department of Transportation's traditional mission and duties and would limit the exploration of better or complementary options for workforce training efforts.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

**Assembly Bill 962: UW System institution participation in
Department of Public Instruction-initiated landscape analysis**

On February 22, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 962 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 810.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 962 on a voice vote, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 869.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 962, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 962** in its entirety.

This bill would require that, if requested, the University of Wisconsin System institutions must cooperate with and participate in a Department of Public Instruction-initiated "landscape analysis" of certain educator preparation programs for which the Legislature's Joint Finance Committee approved using funds from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to this bill creating duplicative processes. Every institution in the University of Wisconsin System offering an education preparation program that ultimately leads to licensure is already reviewed by the Department of Public Instruction and the Higher Learning Commission. Additionally, the bill would implement a lengthy process with no continual funds to support increased associated administrative and implementation responsibilities. Instead, the process is supported by existing funds that should be used to support student reading achievement right now.

Finally, the data used by the bill's authors is problematic. The state's Badger Exam differs from those that formed the basis for the national tests relied on by the bill authors and the 2018-19 results of the state test pointed to a higher proficiency rate than the national exams.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 963: Rights reserved to a parent or guardian of a child

On February 22, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 963 by a vote of 60 to 34, Paired 2, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 805.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 963 by a vote of 19 to 12, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 870.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 963, A.J. 4/15/22, p. 932.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 963** in its entirety.

This bill would create a new legal standard for infringement on certain rights for parents with regard to their children.

As a former science teacher, principal, and state superintendent, I know that parents are the first and best teachers our kids have. We know we can improve our kids’ academic achievement when parents are actively involved in their kids’ lives, including supporting their education. During my time as an educator and administrator, engaging with parents and family members about their kids’ education was invaluable. That is why, as governor, I trust parents, educators, and school boards to work together to do what’s best for our kids.

Unfortunately, this bill is another in a string of legislation aimed not at supporting our parents, our kids, and our schools, and fostering those relationships that improve student outcomes, but at dividing our schools. Politicians on both sides of the aisle have to stop using our kids as political pawns. I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to sowing division in our schools, which only hurts our kids and learning in our classrooms. Now more than ever, especially after these past few years, our focus should be on doing what’s best for our kids, improving school quality, and supporting our classrooms. I continue to urge the Wisconsin State Legislature to make meaningful, sustainable investments in K–12 education so we can ensure our educators, staff, administrators, and school boards can maintain robust communication and collaboration with parents and parent involvement and improve outcomes in our schools. By providing long–term state support for our schools and bolstering staff resources, we can better empower and facilitate parent engagement, which is critically important for our kids’ success.

For these reasons, I cannot support this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 965: The components, methods, and formulas the Department of Public Instruction uses to publish school and school district accountability reports

On February 22, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 965 by a vote of 60 to 33, Paired 2, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 806.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 965 by a vote of 20 to 11, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 870.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 965, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 965** in its entirety.

This bill requires the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to seek legislative approval for any changes to future report card measures, index systems, or other components, methods, and formulas by requiring DPI to promulgate

rules. Further, the bill prohibits DPI from weighing pupil growth more heavily than pupil performance in calculating overall school report card scores. Finally, it requires DPI to use components and formulas used for school and school district report cards for the 2018–19 school year for report cards prepared for the 2021–22 school year.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature’s continued efforts to politicize our schools and our classrooms. For years, DPI has reported school and school district report cards on an annual basis. This bill would constrain DPI’s ability to improve how it calculates school report card scores, including changes based on input from parents, educators, and school administrators, as well as education experts, on what metrics best reflect school and student achievement. As I have said before and appreciate the opportunity to reiterate again today, I trust parents, educators, and schools to work together to do what is best for our kids—they have long been doing this work without political interference and micromanagement by the Legislature.

Moreover, this legislation again fails to provide meaningful investments in our kids and our schools. Our kids have faced an especially challenging few years due to the coronavirus pandemic. We must act swiftly to ensure our kids have the support and resources to be successful, and that conversation begins with the state upholding its obligation to provide meaningful, sustainable investments in our schools. Over the course of the last three years, we have worked diligently to support and improve school quality after a decade of disinvestment. Now, our pre–K–12 education system ranks 8th best in the country after falling to 17th just five years ago. We can and should do more, I have called repeatedly on the Legislature to do so, and I welcome the opportunity to work together to do what’s best for our kids.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 966: Reorganizing the Milwaukee Public School System into four to eight school districts and creating a Milwaukee Public Schools Redistricting and Implementation Commission

On February 22, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 966 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 806.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 966 by a vote of 19 to 12, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 870.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 966, A.J. 4/15/22, p. 932.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 966** in its entirety.

This bill would dissolve the Milwaukee Public Schools System (MPS) and catalyze the creation of multiple school districts by July 1, 2024, to serve the same geographic area. The bill mandates that a Milwaukee Public Schools Redistricting and Implementation Commission would devise the new MPS structure and plans would have to be submitted to the Legislature.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to dissolving MPS without evidence that doing so will provide the measures and support necessary to help kids in the Milwaukee area. This bill’s provisions could weaken city–wide school initiatives that are a strength of MPS, could substantially alter individual school funding, and could result in substantial employee movement both within and potentially out of MPS. Further, this bill fails to assign membership to the proposed Commission to stakeholders that represent teachers, parents, students, or school board members who best understand what students in MPS need.

Moreover, this bill represents yet another attempt by this Legislature to politicize our schools and an unprecedented intrusion on local control in our public school districts. At a minimum, such a broad, sweeping plan should be developed in consultation with parents, educators, and administrators of MPS, drafted together with legislators who represent MPS parents, students, and schools, and considered meaningfully by and with input from the greater Milwaukee community. This bill fails on each front.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 967: High-performing charter schools authorized by school boards

On February 22, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 967 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 806.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 967 by a vote of 20 to 11, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 871.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 967, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 967** in its entirety.

This bill requires a school board to include a provision in the authorizing contract of a charter school to allow the charter governing board to open one or more additional charter schools if all of the charter schools operated by the governing board were assigned one of the top two performance categories in the most recent school and school district accountability report published by the Department of Public Instruction.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature’s attempt to usurp the local authority of elected school board members to decide what conditions must be met for the expansion of a school board–authorized charter school. Charter schools were first authorized in Wisconsin in 1993 and there are currently more than 200 charter schools authorized by school boards in Wisconsin, each with a carefully considered contract to operate. Each of these charter school governing boards may request additional schools if and when their authorizing contract is renewed by their school board, and locally elected decision–makers can then decide if additional schools are in the best interest of their community. We should trust parents, educators, and school districts to work together to do what’s best for our kids and what makes sense for their local community. The Legislature’s attempt to remove such decision–making authority from local school boards undermines these decisions being made at the local level.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 968: Creating a Charter School Authorizing Board and allowing the board to authorize independent charter schools

On February 22, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 968 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 807.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 968 by a vote of 20 to 11, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 871.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 968, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 968** in its entirety.

This bill creates the Charter School Authorizing Board (CSAB) consisting of the State Superintendent, two members appointed by the Governor, two members appointed by the State Superintendent, and six members appointed by legislative leaders. The CSAB is attached to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and may authorize independent charter schools, funded in the same manner as those chartered by the UW System Office of Educational Opportunity (OEO).

I am vetoing this bill because I object to the Legislature’s continued efforts to inject partisan politics and micromanagement into our education system. Specifically, this bill creates an unelected, unaccountable board to authorize and

supervise new charter schools in Wisconsin, in violation of Article X, Section 1 of the Wisconsin Constitution. The framers of our constitution vested the supervision of public instruction in the State Superintendent, a constitutional officer elected by the people of this state. Here, the board would not be accountable to the State Superintendent or voters of Wisconsin. Instead, the bill allows Legislative leaders, who are not elected by the entire state, to appoint a majority of the eleven board members.

I further object to complicating our school funding system by creating yet another state-level charter school authorizer. Currently, funding for students in an OEO authorized independent charter school is provided through state General Purpose Revenue (GPR) and a corresponding state general aid reduction to the resident school district of a child attending such a school. While the resident school district is allowed to count the student in their membership for revenue limits and state general aid purposes, they are generally not made whole for the state aid reduction, which can result in higher property taxes for residents in those school districts. This funding system results in inconsistent financial impacts on property taxes and overall public school resources with varying relative costs per pupil and relative property value per pupil.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 970: Parental choice programs; eliminating income limits and certain pupil participation limits; private school tuition for pupils in parental choice programs; and an education expense reimbursement program

On February 22, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 970 by a vote of 59 to 34, Paired 2, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 808.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 970 by a vote of 20 to 11, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 871.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 970, A.J. 4/15/22, p. 931.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 970** in its entirety.

This bill eliminates income limits and participation limits in the Parental Choice Programs and creates an unfunded \$1,000 per-student education account reimbursement program.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to the drastic impact it could have on families; according to the Department of Public Instruction, the impact on taxpayers in a school year could exceed \$500,000,000. It is remarkable to me that many supporters of this bill, who commonly express concerns about property taxes when it comes to supporting more than 800,000 public school children in our state, are apparently unfazed by the fiscal impact this bill could have on families due to the way these programs are funded.

Similarly, I object to creating a new reimbursement program with no designated state funding source. While courses offered by approved educational providers may benefit students, the bill contains no appropriation, oversight, or accountability to implement the \$1,000 reimbursement for educational materials.

Finally, I am vetoing this bill because it could jeopardize the state's Maintenance of Effort obligations related to the receipt of over \$2 billion of federal funding for public and private schools by increasing K-12 expenditures without increasing higher education expenditures.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 984: Admission requirements at University of Wisconsin System institutions

On February 23, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 984 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/23/22, p. 849.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 984 by a vote of 18 to 13, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 872.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 984, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 984** in its entirety.

This bill requires that the University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents and System institutions establish and use only “objective admissions criteria” in making undergraduate student admissions determinations and course admission criteria and requires that institutions publish the criteria online.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety for several reasons, among them the fact that the concerns this bill purports to address are already addressed under current law—Wisconsin state statutes already prohibit any tests based on partisanship, religion, national origin, or sex in student admissions for the University of Wisconsin System. As I have also said before, I object to the Legislature’s efforts to politicize our campuses and micromanage our higher education institutions. I also object to the Legislature haphazardly mandating the University of Wisconsin System to use only certain criteria in the admissions process that Legislature apparently took no care to even define, much less extrapolate upon, in the present bill before me.

Moreover, this bill would likely have inadvertent but severe consequences for Wisconsin’s workforce and our ability to likewise keep talented Wisconsinites here by arbitrarily limiting enrollment in our universities. In so doing, I am also concerned this bill might necessarily affect non-traditional students, including folks returning to education, service members and veterans, or other individuals who might not have taken a typical path to one of our institutions but who nevertheless are an essential part of our state’s success.

Implementing this bill could severely and negatively impact overall enrollment across the System, hindering both the state’s future workforce and individuals seeking access to the high-quality education System institutions provide.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 995: A parental opt-out from face covering requirements in school buildings and on school grounds and requiring school boards to offer pupils a full-time, in-person option

On February 22, 2022, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 995 by a vote of 60 to 32, Paired 2, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 809.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 995 by a vote of 19 to 11, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 872.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 995, A.J. 4/8/22, p. 919.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 995** in its entirety.

This bill prohibits school board districts or their employees from requiring students to wear face coverings in school buildings or on public school grounds if the student is opted out of the requirement. It also requires a school board to provide a full-time, in-person option for all pupils enrolled in the school district.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature inserting itself into mitigation decisions that parents, educators, and schools have been making together at the local school district level throughout this pandemic to keep our kids, our educators, and our classrooms safe. Having spent most of my career working in Wisconsin schools and classrooms, I know that every school district in Wisconsin looks different—they have different challenges, different class sizes, and different facilities. This is among the reasons why many Wisconsin schools returned to in-person instruction in 2020 and we have trusted local districts, parents, and schools, in consultation with local public health officials, to make decisions about mitigation efforts that make sense for their schools based on their unique needs. We will continue to do so.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 16: Requirements for children born alive following abortion or attempted abortion

On September 28, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 16 by a vote of 19 to 12, S.J. 9/28/21, p. 514.

On October 27, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 16 by a vote of 55 to 38, Paired 2, A.J. 10/27/21, p. 545.

On December 3, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 16, S.J. 12/6/21, p. 638.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

December 3, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 16** in its entirety.

This bill relates to healthcare provider standards of care following an abortion and provides a criminal penalty.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to legislation designed to interfere between patients and their physicians. This bill only serves to create political interference with the personal healthcare decisions made by parents, in consultation with their healthcare providers, while faced with difficult reproductive healthcare decisions late in pregnancy due to medical emergencies and life-threatening circumstances. Moreover, existing state law already provides the protection this bill seeks.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 38: Return to in-person work for state employees

On February 16, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 38 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1 by a vote of 21 to 11, S.J. 2/16/21, p. 119) by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 2/16/21, p. 119.

On March 23, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 38 by a vote of 60 to 35, Paired 2, A.J. 3/23/21, p. 165.

On March 26, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 38, S.J. 3/29/21, p. 221.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 26, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 38** in its entirety.

This bill, as amended, requires the Governor to submit a plan to the Legislature, no later than 21 days after the effective date of the bill, for when all state employees that were required to perform their duties at the offices of their employment with an agency on March 1, 2020, will return to in-person work at the offices of their agencies.

I am vetoing this bill because it encroaches on the authority of the Governor to administer and oversee employment policies for executive branch agencies. While the required plan would be nonbinding, I object to the interference by the Legislature on executive branch employment policy.

Moreover, our state workers have been on the frontline response of this pandemic, working to serve Wisconsinites through one of the worst public health crises our state has faced. Our state would not have been able to adequately respond to this crisis or provide the support Wisconsinites have needed without our state workers, many of whom have gone well beyond the ordinary call of duty to serve the people of our state in the face of unparalleled challenges. This work should not be discounted or demeaned. These workers deserve our gratitude and respect.

As more individuals are vaccinated, the Department of Administration (DOA) has begun post-COVID-19 pandemic planning for state employees and agency offices. According to the Division of Personnel Management, beginning April 5, 2021, state facilities managed by DOA will reopen to a larger segment of state employees and the public. DOA continues to collaborate with the Department of Health Services on developing and updating the reopening policies for executive branch agency offices and will adjust capacity guidelines as warranted, with a goal of resuming normal office operations the summer of 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 39: Participation in interscholastic athletics and extracurricular activities

On March 16, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 39 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1) by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 3/16/21, p. 189.

On March 23, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 39 by a vote of 58 to 35, Paired 2, A.J. 3/23/21, p. 167.

On March 26, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 39, S.J. 3/29/21, p. 222.

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TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 26, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing 2019 **Senate Bill 39** in its entirety.

This bill allows a student who attends a virtual charter school in a nonresident school district to participate in interscholastic athletics and extracurricular activities in the student’s resident school district.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to undermining local decision-making by school boards regarding which students may participate in interscholastic athletics and other extracurricular activities. While a resident school district can enforce standards and expectations for its own students who participate in such activities, the resident school district would not be able to do the same for students of non-resident charter schools, as it would have no information regarding the pupil’s school attendance or academic performance. The bill would therefore erode the distinction between education-based athletics and community recreation programs by holding students that attend their resident school district and students that attend a virtual charter school in another school district to possibly different academic, disciplinary, and attendance standards.

Furthermore, the bill ignores the funding difference of these pupils for a school district. While a resident school district does not pay an open enrollment payment for homeschooled students, it does pay one to a nonresident virtual charter school for any resident pupil that attends the charter school. Fees a resident school district might collect for interscholastic athletics and extracurricular activities are insufficient to cover the full cost of participation, particularly when you factor in such open enrollment payments.

Finally, in 2017, the member schools of the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association, a private, member-driven organization which is comprised of public and private schools, voted 52 to 334 against allowing a student attending a nonresident virtual charter school to be eligible in the student’s district of residence.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 89: Certification requirements for emergency medical responders

On April 14, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 89 on a voice vote, S.J. 4/14/21, p. 257.

On January 25, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 89, A.J. 1/25/22, p. 684.

On March 31, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 89, S.J. 3/31/22, p. 908.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 31, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 89** in its entirety.

This bill would prohibit the Department of Health Services from requiring an applicant who is applying for certification as an emergency medical responder to register with or take the examination of the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT), effectively allowing an emergency medical responder to bypass this examination.

Our emergency medical responders are doing critically important work in our communities. I support making meaningful, long-term investments in our healthcare workers and infrastructure, including increasing shared revenue, which can help support local investments in emergency medical services across our state. Our emergency medical service providers have faced challenges over the course of the last decade. Since 2011, state aid to communities has gone down by more than nine percent, while public safety costs have increased more than 16 percent. At the same time, our state relies on nearly 800 emergency medical service providers, and more than half are either operated exclusively by volunteers or through a combination of volunteers and paid staff. This work is critically important for healthcare access, especially in our rural communities.

As our state has long faced workforce challenges that preceded the pandemic, and now has historically low levels of unemployment and the fewest number of people unemployed ever in state history, it has grown increasingly difficult to find new volunteers and paid employees to step into these important roles. Rising costs, coupled with the lack of available staffing, have forced some communities to make cuts or drastically scale back public safety efforts, including emergency medical services.

I was proud during my State of the State address to announce we are investing nearly \$30 million into supporting emergency medical services and service providers across our state. This investment includes \$20 million that will go to emergency medical service providers across the state for whatever help the need the most, whether it is increasing staffing support, getting first responders more training, or purchasing an ambulance, medical equipment, or supplies. I also am investing \$130 million into finding innovative, community-based solutions to our state’s longstanding workforce challenges that will help support our talented workforce while bringing more talented workers to Wisconsin.

While we can and must do more to support our emergency medical service and responders by finding sustainable, long-term solutions to these challenges to ensure these services are available in communities across our state, I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to potentially lowering statewide educational qualifications needed to be certified as an emergency medical responder in Wisconsin. These are provisions in this bill I am open to considering. Specifically, I support ensuring someone can satisfy emergency medical responder certification requirements by demonstrating they have military service training, education, or experience that is substantially equivalent to the course required for emergency medical responder certification. This effort could help further ensure our veterans entering our workforce after their service face fewer barriers to finding work. However, I cannot support other provisions in this legislation that I am concerned would have negative, long-term effects on patient care by lowering educational and training qualifications.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 117: Boards of police and fire commissioners and protective services departments in populous cities

On May 11, 2021, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 117 on a voice vote, S.J. 5/11/21, p. 305, and passed Senate Bill 117, as amended, by a vote of 22 to 11, S.J. 5/11/21, p. 305.

On January 25, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 117 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/25/22, p. 685.

On March 31, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 117, S.J. 3/31/22, p. 909.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 31, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 117** in its entirety.

This bill would make multiple changes to the membership and duties of the police and fire commissions of the city of Milwaukee and the city of Madison. This bill would establish criteria for the selection of certain members of these commissions and mandates similarities between these two cities' commissions. The bill would also make changes to the disciplinary trail process.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to minimizing or restricting local control and undermining trust in local governance. For example, under this bill certain membership changes do not require candidates to reside within the boundaries of the impacted community. This would erode local control over these protective service departments. In addition, the bill requires the city of Milwaukee's commission to include a three-member panel evaluating a complaint against an officer or firefighter. Under this provision, that could include an individual who served with the individual under investigation or with the individual's cohort. This could unnecessarily undermine public and community trust in disciplinary decisions.

I am also vetoing the bill because it may interfere with progress already made in protective service oversight. The city of Madison recently completed an independent review of its police department and created the recommended Civilian Oversight Board and an Office of the Independent Monitor. The changes mandated by this bill could disrupt local efforts to improve governance that are already underway.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 119: Decreasing shared revenue payments to municipalities based on decreasing funding for law enforcement officers, members of the paid fire department, and emergency medical responders

On June 9, 2021, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 119 on a voice vote, S.J. 6/9/21, p. 350, and passed Senate Bill 119, as amended, by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 6/9/21, p. 350.

On June 22, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 119 by a vote of 61 to 37, A.J. 6/22/21, p. 357.

On August 6, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 119, S.J. 8/6/21, p. 458.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

August 6, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 119** in its entirety.

This bill would reduce shared revenue payments to counties and municipalities by the amount a county or municipality reduces its budget dedicated to hiring, training, and retaining law enforcement, fire and emergency medical personnel compared to the prior year. The bill also provides for reductions in shared revenue payments in such cases here budgets are held flat, but personnel counts decline. In such cases, payments would be decreased by the amount of the decline in compensation paid to personnel no longer retained by the municipality. Reductions in aid would be redistributed among municipalities not subject to the reductions. These modifications would apply in 2021 and all following years.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to the onerous restrictions it imposes on the ability of Wisconsin local governments to set their budgets. Due in no small part to actions at the state level over the course of recent years, local governments across the state have had to cut funding for public safety as levy limits and expenditure restraints have limited their ability to increase revenue. Rather than help with the fiscal constraints that local governments are experiencing, this bill seeks to micromanage local decision-making. Local governments and local elected officials are well-positioned to make informed decisions about what is best for their communities and how to meet the needs of the people they serve and represent.

To help local governments pay for critical services, my biennial budget request included increases in County and Municipal Aid and levy limit flexibility so that communities across Wisconsin could more readily increase support for essential services as they see fit. The Legislature refused to act on these requests and instead attempts through this bill to constrain local governments rather than giving them the tools to pay for increased cost pressures.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 125: Creating an individual income tax subtraction for tuition paid for apprenticeship programs

On October 25, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 125 by a vote of 19 to 13, S.J. 10/25/21, p. 570.

On October 26, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 125 by a vote of 60 to 35, A.J. 10/26/21, p. 535.

On December 3, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 125, S.J. 12/6/21, p. 637.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

December 3, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 125** in its entirety.

This bill would permit a tax subtraction for certain tuition expenses paid by an individual for the individual or their dependent to participate in an apprenticeship program approved by the Department of Workforce Development.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the manner in which it is duplicative of certain existing tax benefits while leaving out important partners in Wisconsin's apprenticeship system. Under current law, an individual can qualify for existing tuition tax breaks for tuition they have paid to a variety of higher education institutions, including but not limited to Wisconsin universities, technical colleges, private colleges, certain approved vocational schools, and even institutions of higher education in Minnesota that fall under the Minnesota-Wisconsin reciprocity agreement. Furthermore, the bill omits key participants in the apprenticeship system by not including tuition expenses paid by trade unions and employers on behalf of their employees.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 170: Paddlewheel raffles

On April 14, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 170 on a voice vote, S.J. 4/14/21, p. 257.

On May 11, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 170 by a vote of 61 to 35, A.J. 5/11/21, p. 276.

On May 21, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 170, S.J. 5/24/21, p. 324.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

May 21, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing 2021 **Senate Bill 170** in its entirety.

This bill would allow an organization with a Class B raffle license to conduct a raffle by using a paddlewheel.

I object to this bill and am once gain vetoing it because paddlewheel gambling is not permitted by the Wisconsin Constitution. Under Article IV, Section 24, raffles may be licensed only under limited circumstances. Even though Senate Bill 170 uses the term “raffle,” paddlewheel gambling is not a raffle as contemplated by the constitutional text. Instead, it is more similar to roulette, which is a distinct form of gambling under our Constitution. While a roulette wheel typically lies horizontally and is spun with a ball to determine the winner based on chance, and a paddlewheel as described in this bill hangs vertically and is spun to determine the winner using a pointer or marker based on chance, this is a distinction without a difference. I cannot knowingly sign a bill that I believe is prohibited by our Constitution.

Furthermore, as I stated when I vetoed this bill last year, the expansion proposed by this bill creates an unnecessary risk of gaming revenue for the State. Tribal Nations have exclusive rights to conduct Class III gaming in Wisconsin, as guaranteed under the tribal gaming compacts. The compacts signed by the State of Wisconsin and the Tribes enable revenue-sharing payments from the Tribes to the State in exchange for an agreement by the State to not substantively alter the charitable games authorized by the State or allow the operation of any additional Class III games. By expanding the definition of raffle to include this device, or by adding a newly approved form of Class III game, this bill could be considered a violation of the compacts.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 183: Legislative oversight of federal COVID–19 funds

On March 23, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 183 by a vote of 18 to 12, S.J. 3/23/21, p. 208.

On March 23, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 183 by a vote of 59 to 36, Paired 2, A.J. 3/23/21, p. 166.

On March 29, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 183, S.J. 3/29/21, p. 222.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing 2019 **Senate Bill 183** in its entirety.

The bill provides a role for the Legislature in the expenditure of federal funds related to COVID–19 received b[y] the state from the effective date of the bill until June 30, 2022. Specifically, the bill requires the Governor to submit a plan to the Joint Committee on Finance for any federal funds received by the state related to COVID–19 activities, subject to a 14+day passive review process.

I am vetoing the bill because it is critical to get the federal COVID–19 relief funds in the hands of Wisconsinites and businesses that need it as quickly as possible, and I have concerns that the process outlined in the bill will prevent that from

happening. Under the bill, and objection by any committee member could hold up funding for an indeterminate amount of time, as happens not infrequently under the current 14–day passive review process. This would unnecessarily delay the distribution of these funds, many of which have to be distributed according to federal law and using existing formulas.

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 as confirmed by legislative leadership in a letter they send to me in April 2020. At the same time, I understand the Legislature’s desire to know how the funding is being distributed and I am committed to transparency about our effort to meet the needs of Wisconsin’s citizens and businesses as quickly as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 203: The secure delivery of absentee ballots

On May 11, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 203 (as amended by Senate Amendment 2) by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 5/11/21, p. 308.

On June 22, 2021, the assembly adopted Assembly Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 203 on a voice vote, A.J. 6/22/21, p. 367, and concurred in Senate Bill 203, as amended, by a vote of 60 to 38, A.J. 6/22/21, p. 367.

On June 23, 2021, the senate concurred in Assembly Amendment 1 on a voice vote, S.J. 6/23/21, p. 381.

On August 10, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 203, S.J. 8/10/21, p. 460.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

August 10, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 203** in its entirety.

This bill would create new requirements for how a municipality can conduct an election event where people return completed ballots and also would restrict who could deliver an absentee ballot on behalf of another voter.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to the limitations it places on municipalities that conduct absentee ballot collection events. In 2020, these innovative events allowed poll workers to answer questions about voting and registration, and to help registered voters return their ballots properly during the coronavirus pandemic. These events were helpful to our local governments and our voters, ensuring people had the opportunity to verify that their absentee ballots were completed properly before returning. While I appreciate that the bill attempts to codify a procedure for holding such an event, I do not approve of the way this bill would prevent municipalities from offering other important voter services and restrict the timeline during which the events could be held.

I also object to the additional restrictions regarding who may return a ballot on behalf of a voter. This bill would require that a person who cannot return their absentee ballot on their own either use one of a short list of approved relatives or guardians or designate another person in writing. Any person helping to return ballots would be limited to returning only two ballots, and they would have to be a registered voter in Wisconsin. These unnecessary restrictions would significantly reduce the circle of people who a confined voter could turn to for help with absentee voting. For example, the bill would not allow a 16–year–old grandchild to help their grandmother return her ballot simply because the grandchild is not old enough to vote. A trusted neighbor would be limited to helping only two elderly or infirm neighbors return their ballots, but not a third. Furthermore, requiring a voter to write a letter designating a non–family member to return their absentee ballot is an unfair and unnecessary burden on what is likely an already vulnerable voter.

Our state laws already prohibit a person from receiving and then failing to deliver official ballots, preventing their delivery in time, and destroying or concealing the ballots. This bill adds no additional security or fraud prevention beyond what our state laws already provide. One can easily imagine the ways that the measures proposed in this bill would result in voters being deprived of their fundamental right to vote. The right to vote is the cornerstone of our democracy and to restrict that right is undemocratic.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

Senate Bill 204: Absentee ballot applications, unsolicited mailing or transmission of absentee ballot applications and absentee ballots, canvassing absentee ballots, electronic voter registration

On June 9, 2021, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 204 by a vote of 18 to 14, S.J. 6/9/21, p. 352, and passed Senate Bill 204, as amended, by a vote of 18 to 14, S.J. 6/9/21, p. 355.

On June 22, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 204 by a vote of 60 to 38, A.J. 6/22/21, p. 361.

On August 10, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 204, S.J. 8/10/21, p. 460.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

August 10, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 204** in its entirety.

This bill would make a series of changes to the proves of applying for and receiving an absentee ballot, including new signature requirements for applications, restrictions on automatically receiving absentee ballots, and prohibitions on sending absentee ballots or applications before they are requested by voters, among others.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to the significant and unnecessary changes this bill would implement that would make absentee voting more difficult and result in the disenfranchisement of voters across Wisconsin. Current law requires proof of identification when you first apply to vote absentee (and thereafter only if the information changes), and the signature requirement is met when a voter signs the ballot envelope to confirm they wanted to vote absentee. This [b]ill would complicate this proves in several ways. The bill requires the Elections Commission to create a new form for applying to vote absentee, would require copies of voter identification each time, regardless of changes, and would require a signature separate from the ballot envelope for each application. Further, eligible electors could no longer apply to receive absentee ballots for all elections in a calendar year but rather would need to apply to have absentee ballots sent for each individual primary and its associated election. And clerks could not send an absentee ballot application prospectively. Under this bill, most individuals interested in voting absentee in multiple election cycles would need to repeatedly send in an application and copies of their voter identification throughout the year, even if their information and identification had not changed. This proposed burdensome process is clearly designed to make it more difficult to vote absentee.

The bill also would pose significant new burdens to voters who are indefinitely confined because of age, physical illness, infirmity, or disability—in face it removes all indefinitely confined voters who applied for absentee ballots between March 12, 2020 and November 3, 2020. While indefinitely confined voters would be able to apply and receive absentee ballots automatically for the entire year, the bill layers on new requirements for the absentee ballot application process, requiring proof of identity or a statement from a U.S. adult citizen affirming identity, and adds another separate form and annual application process for people to qualify as indefinitely confined. The bill also directs a clerk to end such a voter’s receipt of absentee ballots if the voter chooses to not vote in an election or primary or if the clerk receives “reliable information” that the voter is not actually indefinitely confined. Requiring people who are disabled, elderly, or infirm to fill out separate applications every year to either obtain identification or find people to attest to their identity is overly burdensome to both voters and clerks. This bill would only greatly complicate absentee voting for those who need absentee voting the most.

Finally, the bill contains a series of other objectionable, unnecessary changes which would result in more work for already overextended local election officials. For example, it requires clerks on election day to post hourly updates on the number of absentee ballots transmitted, returned, and counted. It also would not allow a clerk’s initials on the absentee ballot to be preprinted or stamped. These changes create more work for officials but provide no benefit for ensuring our elections are free and fair.

The bill fails to provide meaningful additional security for elections, is likely to disenfranchise numerous voters, particularly in our most vulnerable populations, and makes the whole absentee voting process less efficient and less user-friendly, and all but guarantee the need for additional staff during elections.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 205: Absentee voting in certain residential care facilities and retirement homes

On June 9, 2021, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 2 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1) to Senate Bill 205 on a voice vote, S.J. 6/9/21, p. 352, and passed Senate Bill 205, as amended, by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 6/9/21, p. 354.

On June 22, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 205 by a vote of 60 to 38, A.J. 6/22/21, p. 359.

On August 10, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 205, S.J. 8/10/21, p. 461.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

August 10, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 205** in its entirety.

This bill would modify voting at a qualifying nursing home residential care facility, shorten the time a voter in that type of facility could cast their ballot, and require the administrator of the facility to contact family members of the resident voter so that those family members supervise the voter while they cast their vote.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to shortening the time allowed to administer voting at a nursing home or assisted living facility. Current law requires special voting deputies to administer voting at a qualifying by 5 p.m. on the Monday before an election, ensuring flexibility to schedule voting in these locations. This bill would shorten the window so that they must be done by 5 p.m. on the sixth working day preceding the election. The bill provides no justification for this change to the voting window for this vulnerable population.

Among other provisions, the bill would also require the administrator of the facility to contact every family member of a resident voter for whom the facility has contact information so that those family members might supervise the voter while they cast their vote. The law already allows the administrator of a facility to contact family members for this purpose at the resident voter's request. This bill deprives resident voters of their right to a private and independent vote by removing voter's ability to choose whether family is contacted or not.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 210: Election observers

On April 14, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 210 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1) by a vote of 20 to 11, S.J. 4/14/21, p. 259.

On June 22, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 210 by a vote of 60 to 38, A.J. 6/22/21, p. 368.

On August 10, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 210, S.J. 8/10/21, p. 461.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

August 10, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 210** in its entirety.

This bill would modify certain election procedures by requiring the distance between election observers and tables where recount activities are occurring to be no more than three feet, would require all observers to wear certain badgers, would specify that it is an offense to interfere with a voter in preparing or casting their ballot or hinder an election official, and would specify that it is an offence to intentionally obstruct an observer’s access to observe election procedures.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to the reduction of distance between election observers and tables where election activities are occurring. Under current law, election procedures specify that the distance is a minimum of three feet and a maximum of eight feet, which allows observes sufficient proximity to ensure election procedures are being followed correctly and for the local officials to ensure they can provide appropriate viewing areas given the space available without observers getting in the way. Aside from being unnecessary, mandating that election observers be no more than three feet away creates a greater potential for observers to interfere with or intimidate election officials performing their duties, and a practical concern that observers could intrude upon election officials and possibly prevent them from effectively and efficiently carrying out their duties, both of which could degrade the quality of our elections.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 212: Defects on absentee ballot certificates, certain kinds of election fraud

On May 11, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 212 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1) by a vote of 20 to 13, S.J. 5/11/21, p. 308.

On June 22, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 212 by a vote of 60 to 38, A.J. 6/22/21, p. 360.

On August 10, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 212, S.J. 8/10/21, p. 462.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

August 10, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 212** in its entirety.

This bill explicitly prohibits any person other than a voter or a witness from correcting an error on an absentee ballot and creates a method of notifying a voter via a website that their ballot will be discarded if not corrected.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to its prohibition on the current, long-standing practice of clerks in this state correcting minor errors and believe that this bill will almost certainly result in valid ballots never being counted. The bill would create severe penalties for a clerk making the most minor of corrections to an otherwise properly completed absentee ballot certificate, such as fixing the zip code. There is a clear difference between a ballot where the witness simply missed the zip code portion of the address, though the rest was complete, and a ballot that had no witness at all. This bill would treat all errors the same, requiring all ballots with even the most inconsequential typo to either be discarded or sent back to the voter if the clerk has time.

Additionally, because the bill would prevent any person but the voter or witness from correcting their respective mistakes, and because ballots will be discarded if not corrected, the method of notifying voters of an error become critically important. The bill only requires that notification of an error be posted via the MyVote Wisconsin website. Other means of contact are allowed but not required. While it may be practical for a clerk to call a small number of voters who have made an error, it is unrealistic for clerks to call large numbers of voters to warn them that their ballot is being discarded if they do not correct it. A person in a community with fewer people, and therefore fewer absentee voters, may be likely to receive such a warning call, but a person in a more populated area is unlikely to be called and warned. Furthermore, by only requiring voters to be warned via a website that their vote will not be counted, this bill would also disadvantage populations throughout the state who may have difficulty using or accessing the internet.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 213: Actions for violations of elections laws

On April 14, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 213 (as amended by Senate Amendment 2) by a vote of 20 to 11, S.J. 4/14/21, p. 259.

On February 24, 2022, the assembly adopted Assembly Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 213, as amended, on a voice vote, A.J. 2/24/22, p. 864, and concurred in Senate Bill 213, as amended, on a voice vote, A.J. 2/24/22, p. 865.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Amendment 1 on a voice vote, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 861.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 213, S.J. 4/15/22, p. 931.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 213** in its entirety.

This bill would change the venue for certain election law violations. Currently an action for certain election law violations must occur in the county where the defendant resides; the bill would provide that venue is proper in the county where the alleged violation occurred or, in some circumstances, a contiguous county. The bill would also allow any person to bypass filing a complaint with the Wisconsin Elections Commission in favor of commencing an action against an election official they believe has acted contrary to the law without first filing a complaint with the Wisconsin Elections Commission.

The right to vote is fundamental to our democracy; it should not be subject to the whim of politicians who do not like the outcome of an election. Elected officials should not be able to abuse their power to cheat or control the outcomes of our elections or to prevent eligible voters from casting their ballots. This legislation is among many that have been sent to my desk during this legislative session, each passed under the guise of needing to reform our election system because elected officials in this state have enabled disinformation about our elections and election processes. I have and will object to each and every effort by this Legislature and its members to undermine our democracy, to erode confidence in our elections, and to demean and harass dedicated clerks, election administrators, and poll workers.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to changing the venue for these actions and changing the procedure for commencing an action against an election official. Currently, a person accused of violations of state election laws is tried in the circuit court for the county where the defendant resides, with certain exceptions. This bill would specify that the venue for trying certain violations be either in the county where the act occurred or potentially in a contiguous county. This would undoubtedly lead to parties shopping around for judges who are perceived as more sympathetic to one political side or another. This is a dangerous precedent to set, and one which is not healthy for a well-functioning democracy.

I also object to modifying the way in which a person challenges the actions of an election official. Currently, any individual, other than a district attorney or the attorney general, must first file a complaint with the Elections Commission, and only after the commission's review can the matter go before a court. This step is essential as election laws are highly complex. It is quite likely that members of the public may perceive there to be an incorrect action by an election official because they do not understand the detailed law that regulates our elections. By starting the process with the Elections Commission, election experts can review the actions or perceived failures of action and determine if there was a potential violation or if the complainant simply did not understand the law.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 292: Broadcasting election night proceedings

On May 11, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 292 on a voice vote, S.J. 5/11/21, p. 310.

On June 22, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 292 by a vote of 60 to 38, A.J. 6/22/21, p. 362.

On August 10, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 292, S.J. 8/10/21, p. 462.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

August 10, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 292** in its entirety.

This bill would require a municipality that chooses to broadcast or live stream election night canvassing proceedings to store a recording of those proceedings for 22 months.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to creating an unnecessary and unequal burden for certain municipalities. This bill purports to be about transparency, but if that were the case, the bill would have required all municipalities to broadcast or live stream canvassing proceedings and store the recordings of such proceedings. Instead, this bill saddles communities that have, in the interest of transparency, chosen to broadcast their canvassing with the additional requirement to then store a recording of it. By placing an unequal burden on municipalities that choose to broadcast or live stream these proceedings, the bill acts as both a disincentive for municipalities to continue those efforts, and moreover, ultimately disincentives other municipalities from joining and starting this practice.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 296: Participation in a riot

On January 25, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 296 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1 on a voice vote and Senate Amendment 2 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 1/25/22, p. 708) on a voice vote, S.J. 1/25/22, p. 708.

On January 25, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 296 by a vote of 59 to 34, A.J. 1/25/22, p. 687.

On March 31, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 296, S.J. 3/31/22, p. 909.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 31, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 296** in its entirety.

This bill would create a definition of "riot" and creates penalties for certain actions under this new definition.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because the conduct this bill purportedly intends to prevent is already generally prohibited under current law. For instance, intentionally failing or refusing to withdraw from an unlawful assembly in which the person knows has been ordered to disperse is already a crime, as are various forms of battery, damaging property, arson, disorderly conduct, theft, and trespass.

Moreover, this bill inadvertently creates ambiguity, inconsistency, and contradictions in practical application that could be used to infringe on the rights guaranteed under the First Amendment. There is a difference between a peaceful assembly and an unlawful one that threatens public safety, damages property, and destroys livelihoods. Current law already ensures individuals who engage in the latter can be held accountable.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 332: The employment of minors

On October 20, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 332 on a voice vote, S.J. 10/20/21, p. 556.

On January 20, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 332 by a vote of 60 to 35, A.J. 1/20/22, p. 666.

On February 4, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 332, S.J. 2/7/22, p. 743.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

February 4, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 332** in its entirety.

This bill would expand the starting and ending times in a day a minor under age 16 is allowed to work for employers not covered by the federal Fair Labor Standards act.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating two separate systems of work requirements for employers, which would increase the amount of administrative work for businesses when determining the permissible hours and days they are allowed to employ minors. By creating two legal frameworks on this topic, one for employers subject to the Federal Labor Standards Act and a different one for those that are not, the bill will increase complexity for employers, and could result in unintended consequences.

At a time when our state has the lowest unemployment rate in Wisconsin state history at 2.8 percent and the fewest number of people unemployed in our state ever, we must find meaningful, sustainable, and long-term solutions to the workforce challenges that have long plagued our state. For example, I allocated \$130 million in innovative, community-based solutions to address Wisconsin’s longstanding workforce challenges. This includes \$100 million for a Workforce Innovation Grant program to encourage regions and communities to develop leading-edge, long-term solutions to the workforce challenges the state faces in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic; \$20 million toward the Worker Advancement Initiative, which will offer subsidized employment and skills training opportunities with local employers to unemployed individuals; and \$10 million for a Worker Connection Program which will provide workforce career coaches who will connect with individuals attempting to reengage in the workforce post-pandemic.

I also recently proposed putting some of our state’s unprecedented projected revenue surplus toward reducing barriers to employment by decreasing the costs for childcare and caregiving. My plan expanded the newly created Child and Dependent Care Credit from 50 percent of the federal credit to 100 percent, providing nearly \$30 million in tax relief to the 107,000 Wisconsinites who claim the credit. I also proposed providing more than \$100 million to create a new income tax credit for qualified expenses incurred by a family caregiver.

By injecting funding into innovative solutions and providing economic relief to those struggling with the cost of childcare and caregiving, we can truly begin to address our workforce challenges, support working families, and get more people back into the workforce. This bill does not further those goals, and I hope the Legislature will join me in addressing this issue with real, meaningful solutions.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 347: Captive wildlife in facilities holding a U.S. Department of Agriculture exhibitor license

On June 9, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 347 by a vote of 19 to 13, S.J. 6/9/21, p. 354.

On February 23, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 347 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/23/22, p. 829.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 347, S.J. 4/15/22, p. 932.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 347** in its entirety.

This bill removes the requirement that animal exhibition facilities holding a U.S. Department of Agriculture Class C exhibitor license must also hold the relevant license issued by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to reducing the standards to which wildlife exhibition facilities are held in Wisconsin. The U.S. Department of Agriculture Class C license has some requirements that are more lenient than those of the Department of Natural Resources. Eliminating the state licensing requirement for these facilities would prevent the department from applying state standards that are designed to ensure humane handling, care, treatment, and transportation of captive animals.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 365: The broadband expansion grant program

On February 15, 2022, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 365 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 2/15/22, p. 764, and passed Senate Bill 365, as amended, by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 2/15/22, p. 764.

On February 23, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 365 by a vote of 60 to 36, Paired 2, A.J. 2/23/22, p. 855.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 365, S.J. 4/15/22, p. 932.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 365** in its entirety.

The bill modifies the statutory definition of broadband “unserved” areas to be an area of the state not served by at least one Internet service provider that provides download speeds of at least 100 megabits per second and upload speeds of at least 20 megabits per second and removes the statutory definition of broadband “underserved” areas. This bill also modifies the criteria by which the Public Service Commission may award grants under the Broadband Expansion Grant Program, including codifying and making changes to existing procedures that allow an Internet service provider to challenge the awarding of a grant if it currently provides broadband service to the area at the minimum download and upload speeds defined in the bill or if it credibly plans to complete construction of broadband infrastructure and provide broadband service at the minimum speed levels defined by the bill within 24 months. Under the bill, the Commission is required to evaluate such a challenge and prohibits it from funding the grant if it determines the challenge to be credible.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the creation of a procedure that would allow Internet service providers to block competition in rural and outlying areas of the state for up to two years by interfering with grants to other providers, potentially leaving residents with no service, inadequate service, or unaffordable service for a longer period. The Broadband Expansion Grant Program provides funding for broadband infrastructure in areas where private sector investment is insufficient. This statutory challenge process will delay the delivery of critical broadband service to rural areas of Wisconsin, which will leave rural students and residents further behind and put area small businesses at a competitive disadvantage.

I also object to codifying the speed definition of an “unserved” area in state statute. Broadband technology is evolving at a rapid pace and defining the speed of broadband service that leaves an individual as “unserved” in state statute could leave the Public Service Commission unable to make necessary updates to the Broadband Expansion Grant Program quickly in the future.

Expanding broadband to those areas of the state that need it is a key priority of my administration. Between federal pandemic aid and the state funding in the Broadband Expansion Grant Program, my administration has invested over \$280 million in broadband infrastructure to deliver high-speed Internet access. In order to build out this infrastructure as quickly as possible, we need to support any entity that can do the job, and that includes the public sector as well as private sector companies that may not currently serve a specific area. Now is not the time to grant a competitive advantage to providers that have chosen not to deliver this service to these communities.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 394: Advanced practice registered nurses

On January 25, 2022, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 394 on a voice vote, S.J. 1/25/22, p. 709, and passed Senate Bill 394, as amended, by a vote of 19 to 14, S.J. 1/25/22, p. 711.

On February 17, 2022, the assembly adopted Assembly Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 394 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/17/22, p. 776, and concurred in Senate Bill 394, as amended, on a voice vote, A.J. 2/17/22, p. 776.

On March 8, 2022, the senate concurred in Assembly Amendment 1 on a voice vote, S.J. 3/8/22, p. 861.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 394, S.J. 4/15/22, p. 933.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 394** in its entirety.

This bill creates a new license for advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), administered by the Board of Nursing attached to the Department of Safety and Professional Services.

Nurses are essential to our healthcare system, patient care, and ensuring we have healthy communities in Wisconsin. Indeed, look no further than the last few years, during which nurses across our state have worked tirelessly on the front-lines during this pandemic—acts of selflessness and service for which we can never fully express our gratitude.

I recognize there are many individuals who support this legislation and others who do not, each with important stories, considerations, and concerns. I respect the many people and professions on both sides of this conversation. Unfortunately, the bill ultimately before me today does not address some of the issues raised by parties in the medical profession that went unremedied during the legislative process. I am therefore vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to altering current licensure standards for APRNs, allowing practices functionally equivalent to those of physicians or potentially omitting physicians from a patient's care altogether notwithstanding significant differences in required education, training, and experience.

I have appreciated the opportunity to give this thoughtful consideration and I welcome continuing the conversations on this important issue.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 409: Anti-racism and anti-sexism student instruction and anti-racism and anti-sexism training for employees at the University of Wisconsin System and the Technical College System

On February 22, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 409 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1) by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 802.

On February 22, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 409 by a vote of 60 to 33, Paired 2, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 811.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 409, S.J. 4/15/22, p. 933.

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TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 409** in its entirety.

This bill would prohibit providing instruction in any course to students at the University of Wisconsin System and the Wisconsin Technical College System that includes any one of several concepts listed in the bill. Additionally, this bill punishes any institution or technical college found to be in violation of this bill by requiring the University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents and the Technical College System Board to withhold five percent of that institution or college’s state aid allocation. Further, the bill would create a private legal enforcement action, allowing individuals to sue for violations of the bill, and would require a court to award attorney fees among other forms of relief.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating new censorship rules that restrict educators and higher education institutions from teaching honest, complete facts about important historical topics like the Civil War and civil rights. I continue to trust parents, students, educators, and our higher education institutions to work together to do what is best for our students without political interference and micromanagement from politicians in Madison. I also object to the Legislature’s continued efforts to politicize our higher education institutions, sow division on our campuses, and micromanage the University of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Technical College Systems. The Legislature must stop using our kids and our students as political pawns. Educators should be able to teach honest, complete facts, and our students deserve to learn in an atmosphere conducive to learning without the Legislature’s unnecessary, politically motivated encroachment and censorship.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 454: Reading readiness assessments

On October 25, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 454 (as amended by Senate Amendment 3 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 10/25/21, p. 572) by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 10/25/21, p. 572.

On October 26, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 454 by a vote of 62 to 32, Paired 2, A.J. 10/26/21, p. 539.

On November 5, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 454, S.J. 11/5/21, p. 599.

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TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

November 5, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 454** in its entirety.

The bill would mandate school boards and independent charter schools to assess the early literacy skill of pupils in four-year-old kindergarten to second grade using repeated screening assessments throughout the year and to create a personal reading plan for each pupil in five-year-old kindergarten to second grade who is identified as at-risk. It would also mandate the Department of Public Instruction establish and maintain lists of approved fundamental skills screening assessments, universal screening assessments, and diagnostic assessments on its Internet site based on alignment with model academic standards in reading and language arts, and a mandatory minimum sensitivity rate and specificity rate. Further, this bill would mandate a school board, for each school and the district, or operator of an independent charter, to annually submit a report to the Department regarding the number of pupils identified as at-risk, the names of reading assessments used, and the number of pupils give-year-old kindergarten to second grade who receive literacy interventions, all information which the Department would have to then annually compile and report to the Legislature. The bill provides no

additional funding to implement its new mandates for additional testing or to address staffing or other resource needs necessary for implementation.

Due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the prior two years have been especially challenging for our kids, parents, and schools. We must work—and quickly—to address reading proficiency and increase literacy success for every kid in our classrooms. I have advocated for some time, including during my time on the Read to Lead Task Force, for increased efforts at the state level to support our kids and our schools so we can ensure every student’s success. This dialogue, however, must be based on proven, evidence-based practices, and cannot be independent from discussions about the state’s obligation to provide meaningful, sustainable support for our classrooms and our schools.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to fundamentally overhauling Wisconsin literacy instruction and intervention without evidence that more statewide, mandatory testing is the best approach for our students, and without providing the funding needed for implementation. This bill ultimately reduces valuable instruction time while asking schools to strain their existing resources, instead of providing necessary funding to support the work educators, administrators, and staff are currently doing to support reading and literacy for our students.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 463: Requiring school boards to make information about learning materials and educational activities used for pupil instruction available to the public

On September 28, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 463 (as amended by Senate Amendment 2 by a vote of 18 to 12, S.J. 9/28/21, p. 518) by a vote of 19 to 12, S.J. 9/28/21, p. 518.

On September 28, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 463 by a vote of 60 to 38, A.J. 9/28/21, p. 480.

On December 3, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 463, S.J. 12/6/21, p. 637.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

December 3, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 463** in its entirety.

This bill effectively requires school boards to maintain on their website a list of and bibliographic information for every piece of material assigned, distributed, or presented at any activity or course at every school in the district and in every classroom of every grade level for every subject area, with very limited exceptions, and to update that list no less than twice each school year and to provide a full text or copy of the material created by the board or a teacher employed by the board. The bill includes no appropriation and provides no additional resources or staff support to ensure school districts can implement these requirements.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to this bill’s failure to provide the necessary funding to implement these measures. I have and will continue to urge the Wisconsin State Legislature to provide sustainable, long-term state support for K–12 education so we can ensure our school boards, administrators, educators, and staff have the support and resources to further foster communication and collaboration with parents and promote parent involvement.

I trust parents and school boards to work together to do what’s best for our kids because we know we can improve academic achievement when parents have the opportunity to be actively involved in their kids’ lives, including supporting their education. I know how powerful family engagement is in kids’ lives, and as an educator and administrator, I greatly value the opportunity to engage with parents and family members about their children’s education. By providing the necessary, additional funding and bolstering staff resources, we can better empower and facilitate parent engagement, which is essential for our kids’ success.

Additionally, under existing federal law, every school district already must have policies and procedures to make sure parents can request access to instructional materials being taught to their kids. Nearly all school districts also have policies and procedures to address parents’ concerns or complaints about instructional materials being used in their kids’ classrooms. These are essential measures for promoting parent engagement while ensuring transparency in our classrooms.

Finally, this bill exempts independent charter schools and private schools in the various parental choice programs likely funding mostly or entirely by state and local tax dollars. We should be working to improve transparency and accountability for every parent, regardless of which school their kid attends.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 494: Aquatic plant management plans and permit exemptions

On January 25, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 494 (as amended by Senate Amendment 2) by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 1/25/22, p. 711.

On February 23, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 494, as amended, on a voice vote, A.J. 2/23/22, p. 830.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 494, S.J. 4/15/22, p. 933.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 494** in its entirety.

This bill would make numerous changes to the Department of Natural Resources’ aquatic plant management program. The bill would modify the purpose of the aquatic plant management program to require the department to utilize management methods that ensure invasive and nuisance aquatic plants are suppressed or eradicated to the greatest extent possible. The bill would also require that, when reviewing an aquatic plant management plan, the department give equal consideration to plans that utilize chemical treatments. Additionally, the bill would provide an exemption from the permitting process for certain private ponds under 10 acres.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to requiring the department to eradicate invasive and nuisance aquatic plants without sufficient safeguards for protecting the plants and waters of the state. The department currently balances the benefits of eliminating invasive and nuisance aquatic plants with other ecological, social, and economic impacts. Setting eradication as the standard could lead to overaggressive policies that harm our environment, our tourism economy, and quality of life for Wisconsin residents.

I also object to requiring the department to give chemical treatments equal consideration to non-chemical treatments. Individual bodies of water and aquatic management plans must be evaluated to determine the best management strategy. Broadly requiring the department to give equal consideration to chemical treatments, even in cases where chemical treatment is not appropriate, may have the effect of favoring chemical treatments over non-chemical treatments.

I further object to providing an exemption from the permitting process for certain private ponds under 10 acres. This provision could have a major impact on Wisconsin’s waters, as the department estimates that it could apply to up to 45,000 bodies of water. Before issuing a permit for chemical treatment, the department reviews the body of water to determine if there are any known endangered, threatened, or special concern species located at the site. By removing the permit requirement, we would lose this valuable check and potentially harm environmentally and culturally important species[.]

Finally, I object to modifying the aquatic plant management program while the department is in the process of updating its administrative rules for the program. The administrative rulemaking process began in April 2020, with the approval of the scope statement and has involved considerable stakeholder input. Stakeholder input is a valuable part of the rulemaking process and gives a voice to the citizens of Wisconsin. This bill would circumvent the department’s rulemaking process and disregard the stakeholder input that was collected as a part of that process.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 503: Certification of abortion providers under the Medical Assistance program

On October 20, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 503 by a vote of 20 to 11, S.J. 10/20/21, p. 557.

On October 27, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 503 by a vote of 55 to 38, Paired 2, A.J. 10/27/21, p. 546.

On December 3, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 503, S.J. 12/6/21, p. 638.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

December 3, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 503** in its entirety.

This bill would prohibit the Department of Health Services from certifying, and requires the department to decertify by July 1, 2022, and any provider under the Medical Assistance program that is a private entity that provides abortion services, with certain exceptions. The bill would also require the department to seek any waiver of federal law, state plan amendment, or other federal approval necessary to implement this prohibition.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to placing restrictions on a patient's access to basic reproductive healthcare. Under current law, government funding cannot be used to provide abortion services. And yet, this bill maliciously seeks to limit healthcare options for people seeking a number of basic, preventative, and life-saving care, such as pre-natal and pregnancy care, cancer screening and prevention, sexually transmitted infection screening and treatment, and wellness exams.

Amid an ongoing pandemic, we should not be limiting options for folks to access basic and necessary care. We should be doing everything we can to ensure every Wisconsinite has access to quality, affordable healthcare, including preventative healthcare.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 563: Farm-raised game bovids

On October 25, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 563 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1) by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 10/25/21, p. 573.

On January 20, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 563 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/20/22, p. 670.

On March 31, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 563, S.J. 3/31/22, p. 909.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 31, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 563** in its entirety.

This bill would make many statutory changes to allow farm-raised game bovids to be treated the same as farm-raised deer. This bill would allow farm-raised game bovids to be raised as livestock and then be harvested as hunting ranches. These ranches can keep the animals inside a fenced area during the hunt, so long as the area meets a certain size requirement.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to increasing the number on non-native species that can be raised in captivity and used for hunting inside penned areas. Hunting is a proud part of Wisconsin's heritage, and I support ethical hunting based on the principle of fair chase.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

Senate Bill 570: Limiting civil liability for firearm, firearm accessory, and ammunition manufacturers, distributors, importers, trade associations, sellers, and dealers

On November 8, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 570 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 11/8/21, p. 602.

On February 23, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 570 by a vote of 61 to 35, Paired 2, A.J. 2/23/22, p. 833.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 570, S.J. 4/15/22, p. 934.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 570** in its entirety.

This bill would, with certain exceptions, limit the civil liability of firearm, firearm accessory, and ammunition manufacturers, distributors, importers, trade associations, sellers and dealers.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating more immunities for the gun industry. Under the federal Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, Pub. L. 109–92, the gun industry already enjoys the benefit of broad immunity that virtually no other industry receives in federal and state courts. This bill would double down on those privileges and create an unprecedented, punitive fee–shifting mechanism in Wisconsin. I believe the presumption should be an open courthouse door to anyone seeking justice and an honest debate of the law of the land. Any immunity or deviation from that presumption should be tailored and finite. Creating more far–reaching immunities to protect the gun industry is unnecessary and the wrong approach.

As I have previously said, Wisconsinites desperately want their elected leaders to act on gun safety and support having a meaningful, thoughtful dialogue about common–sense solutions that will both respect and uphold rights while keeping our communities safe. These goals are not mutually exclusive, and I continue to welcome constructive conversations to that end.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

Senate Bill 585: Reporting certain crimes and other incidents that occur on school property or school transportation

On November 8, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 585 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 11/8/21, p. 602.

On February 22, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 585 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 802.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 585, S.J. 4/15/22, p. 934.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 585** in its entirety.

This bill would require public school district high schools, independent charter high schools, and private high schools participating in a parental choice program, to collect and submit to the Department of Public Instruction statistics on violations

of municipal disorderly conduct ordinances and certain other crimes. This bill would also require the department to include the statistics on school and school district accountability reports, but the statistics would not be considered in the calculation of school or school district performance for purposes of the accountability reports.

As a former educator, principal, and state superintendent, I know what's best for our kids is what's best for our state, and that includes ensuring our kids are safe, healthy, and in the classroom. Student safety and security, especially at school, is critically important. This is among the reasons that, for years, public schools in Wisconsin have already been reporting on student behavior resulting in that student's suspensions and expulsion. However, I must veto this bill in its entirety for several reasons. First, I object to mandating additional reporting without the necessary funding for implementation. School districts, independent charter schools, and private schools participating in a parental choice program have differing levels of staffing, training, and resources at each high school related to incident and crime reporting. This disparate level of resources may lead to inconsistent reporting and may compromise the value of the data by not providing like comparisons. This problem could be further complicated by the fact that the definition of disorderly conduct is defined at the municipal level, which may lead to inconsistent reporting for school districts spanning multiple municipalities or counties.

I also object to this bill excluding local law enforcement agencies from the reporting process. High schools do not have the same access to the Summary-Based Reporting and Incident-Based Reporting systems, and subsequently the Wisconsin Incident-Based Reporting System, as local law enforcement agencies.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 591: Abortion-inducing drugs; reporting requirements for induced abortions

On October 20, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 591 by a vote of 20 to 11, S.J. 10/20/21, p. 559.

On October 27, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 591 by a vote of 55 to 39, Paired 2, A.J. 10/27/21, p. 548.

On December 3, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 591, S.J. 12/6/21, p. 638.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

December 3, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 591** in its entirety.

This bill would mandate a physician to orally inform a patient of certain information if the patient considering or planning to have an abortion induced by a drug regimen that includes mifepristone, and requires written materials provided to a patient considering an abortion to include certain information. The bill creates additional information to be reported by the hospital, clinic, or other facility to the Department of Health Services, including the patient's reason for seeking abortion, the number of patient's previous induced abortions, and identifying information about the abortion location.

Physicians take an oath to provide patients with medically accurate information so patients can make informed decisions about their health and healthcare. I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to mandating physicians to effectively defy that oath by providing patients medical information that is not ethical or evidence-based and is inaccurate and misleading. Healthcare providers should be trusted to provide medically appropriate and accurate information, treatment, and care for this patients without the unnecessary and political interference of politicians. Further, this bill requires reporting of additional invasive patient information and adds the name of the hospital, clinic, or facility where an abortion was induced to the list of data to be published by the Department of Health Services. This creates needless concern for patient safety and privacy.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 592: Congenital condition educational resources

On October 20, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 592 by a vote of 20 to 11, S.J. 10/20/21, p. 559.

On October 27, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 592 by a vote of 57 to 37, Paired 2, A.J. 10/27/21, p. 548.

On December 3, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 592, S.J. 12/6/21, p. 639.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

December 3, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 592** in its entirety.

Senate Bill 592 mandates that physicians who administer a prenatal or postnatal test for a congenital condition and receive a positive test result disseminate certain information related to the congenital condition to their patients, instead of allowing physicians to use evidence-based practices and their knowledge and expertise as medical professionals to advise parents.

I am vetoing Senate Bill 592 in its entirety because I object to legislation that dictates the conversations between a patient and their healthcare professionals. Physicians take an oath to provide patients with medically accurate information so patients can make informed decisions about their health and healthcare. I trust our doctors to use existing resources in a manner that meets ethical treatment standards, and to have honest, open, and confidential conversations with their patients without politicians interfering with the terms of those conversations.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 593: Sex-selective, disability-selective, and other selective abortions

On October 20, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 593 by a vote of 20 to 11, S.J. 10/20/21, p. 559.

On October 27, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 593 by a vote of 55 to 39, Paired 2, A.J. 10/27/21, p. 548.

On December 3, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 593, S.J. 12/6/21, p. 639.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

December 3, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 593** in its entirety.

This bill would prohibit abortion in certain circumstances based on the perceived reason the patient has obtained the abortion and allows claims for damages to be brought by certain people if a prohibited abortion is performed.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to politicians interfering between patients and their healthcare providers. Wisconsinites have the right to make their own reproductive healthcare decisions. Licenses healthcare professionals should be trusted to give appropriate, evidence-based medical advice. SB 593 would substantially erode and interfere with the patient and provider relationship by encouraging healthcare professionals to evaluate and even question the bases of patients’ decisions. Further, it discourages honest, meaningful conversations between a patient and their physician while inviting intimidation of healthcare professionals by creating a path to legal damages for multiple parties.

I trust women to make the best reproductive healthcare decisions for themselves and their families. These are deeply personal determinations that should be made between a patient and their physician and nobody else.

Respectfully submitted,
 TONY EVERS
 Governor

Senate Bill 597: Early admission to kindergarten and first grade at a private school participating in a parental choice program

On January 25, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 597 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 1/25/22, p. 711.

On February 22, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 597 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 802.

On March 31, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 597, S.J. 3/31/22, p. 909.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 31, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 597** in its entirety.

This bill would allow private choice schools to adopt an early admission policy for four-year-old kindergarten, five-year-old kindergarten, and first grade, and to count that child towards choice program membership.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating a scenario that would likely increase property taxes. Currently, new students enrolling in private schools in the Wisconsin Parental Choice program and Racine Parental Choice program are effectively entirely funded by local school district's property taxes through a revenue limit adjustment and reduction, likely resulting in school districts recovering the lost state revenue through increase in their local property taxes.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS
 Governor

Senate Bill 608: Attendance requirements for parental choice programs and ability to transfer to statewide parental choice program

On October 25, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 608 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 10/25/21, p. 574.

On February 22, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 608 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/22, p. 802.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 608, S.J. 4/15/22, p. 935.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 608** in its entirety.

This bill allows students that participated in the Special Needs Scholarship program in the previous year to meet the prior year's attendance requirement to participate in the Wisconsin Parental Choice program or the Racine Parental Choice program. The bill additionally extends the window of time when students may transfer applications across choice programs and allows applications for the Milwaukee Parental Choice program or Racine Parental Choice program to transfer to the Wisconsin Parental Choice program if certain conditions are met. Finally, as drafted last year, the bill opened a window in November 2021 to allow applications submitted prior to April 2021 to transfer between choice programs.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to complicating the movement of students among the state's private choice programs while these programs continue to be funded in a disparate manner and have different requirements.

Funding for parental choice programs remains convoluted and inconsistent across programs. Currently, new students enrolling in private schools in the Wisconsin Parental Choice program and Racine Parental Choice program are effectively entirely funded by their resident school district's property taxes through a revenue limit adjustment, but students enrolling in private schools in the Milwaukee Parental Choice program are funded almost entirely by the state. Additionally, the bill continues untimely and obsolete provisions.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 609: Stocking pheasants for hunting

On October 25, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 609 by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 10/25/21, p. 574.

On January 20, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 609 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/20/22, p. 671.

On March 31, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 609, S.J. 3/31/22, p. 910.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 31, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 609** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Department of Natural Resources to produce and stock a minimum number of pheasants each year and to stock them on an established schedule. The department would also be required to produce a report identifying where pheasants would be stocked and a detailed plan for stocking those properties.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature's failure to provide resources for the Department of Natural Resources to implement this new requirement. According to the fiscal estimate prepared by the Department of Natural Resources, stocking the number of pheasants required under this bill could cost over \$5.7 million in one-time startup costs an additional \$1.5 million in ongoing annual costs. This is not feasible without providing additional budgetary and staff resources to the department, which are absent from this bill. Additionally, capital projects costing in excess of \$1,000,000 must be enumerated in the State Building Program. This bill does not provide an enumeration for a hatchery expansion at the State Game Farm, which would be necessary to comply with this bill. Finally, the Department of Natural Resources has a history of collaborating with stakeholders in order to make stocking decisions that are science-based, and which incorporate biological, social, and economic factors while ensuring habitat protection, among other considerations. This includes regular consultation the Wisconsin Conservation Congress as well as the Pheasant Advisory Committee, consisting of Department of Natural Resources experts as well as stakeholder group representatives who review and make recommendations on the management of pheasant in Wisconsin. This bill bypasses that informed process.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 612: Stocking brook trout in Lake Michigan

On October 25, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 612 by a vote of 19 to 13, S.J. 10/25/21, p. 575.

On January 20, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 612 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/20/22, p. 671.

On March 31, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 612, S.J. 3/31/22, p. 910.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 31, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 612** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Department of Natural Resources to annually stock at least 100,000 brook trout in Lake Michigan.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to implementing arbitrary stock quotas without considering, much less incorporating, evidence and science-based practices and processes. The Department of Natural Resources has a history of collaborating with stakeholders in order to make stocking decisions that are science-based, and which incorporate biological, social, and economic factors to evaluate stocking fish while ensuring habitat protection, among other considerations. This bill would not allow the department to adjust stocking levels based on angler demand, natural fish reproduction rates, or economic factors. Furthermore, this bill would require the department to shift resources towards stocking brook trout, potentially reducing the propagation of other fish species. This could lead to challenges from sport fishers as certain species of other fish would see limited stocking efforts as resources are shifted toward the arbitrary statutory requirement to stock brook trout.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 621: Legislative redistricting – draft structure

On November 8, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 621 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1) by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 11/8/21, p. 604.

On November 11, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 621 by a vote of 60 to 38, A.J. 11/11/21, p. 572.

On November 18, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 621, S.J. 11/18/21, p. 617.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

November 18, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 621** and Senate Bill 622 in their entirety.

Senate Bill 621 would redistrict the legislative districts of the state and Senate Bill 622 would redistrict congressional districts.

I am vetoing both Senate Bill 621 and Senate Bill 622 in their entirety because I object to maps designed only to undemocratically serve the politicians who draft them. Elected officials are entrusted with the responsibility to work for the people they represent—both those who vote for us and those who do not. These maps were clearly designed to benefit one political party over another and would preserve undemocratic majorities in the state legislature and increase Republicans' chances of disproportionately winning six of Wisconsin's eight congressional districts.

The overwhelming preference among Wisconsin voters in that redistricting maps be prepared by a nonpartisan committee or commission. People want maps that reduce one-party unfair advantages and that support the creation of a government where elected officials are responsive to their communities and have to work to win their votes.

The People's Maps Commission was created in service of that ideal. Executive Order #66 created a nonpartisan commission comprised of nine citizens selected by a panel of three retired judges to represent Wisconsin's congressional districts, different walks of life, and different political opinions. The Commission spent more than a year doing their work over the course of more than 30 open meetings. They solicited feedback and input on how Wisconsin's existing electoral maps affected their communities, map-drawing criteria to consider and prioritize, and how maps following the 2020 U.S. Census could

be improved to better reflect our communities and the people of our state. They sought out feedback on prepared draft sets of maps before and during several stages and iterations of the map-drawing process. The Commission completed the task of drawing lines with transparency, consensus, and voter input in mind, not partisan advantage.

In stark contrast, Senate Bill 621 and Senate Bill 622 only serve the elected officials who voted for them. These weren't the product of public input. There was less than one business day between the end of Republicans' deadline for public redistricting proposals and requesting bill drafts of their maps. And at the recent committee hearing on legislative maps, not a single person spoke in favor except two legislative leaders who drafted these unfair maps.

And that lack of public input shows. The Princeton Gerrymandering Project, which analyzes maps all around the county for partisan fairness, competitiveness, and geography features, gave these maps an overall "F" grade. These maps are based on the unfair maps from a decade ago, which have been called some of the most gerrymandered maps in the county. These unfair maps are irrefutable a rejection of what Wisconsinites have asked for—fair maps and nonpartisan redistricting.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 622: Congressional redistricting

On November 8, 2021, the senate passed Senate Bill 622 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 11/8/21, p. 604.

On November 11, 2021, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 622 by a vote of 60 to 38, A.J. 11/11/21, p. 572.

On November 18, 2021, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 622, S.J. 11/18/21, p. 617.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

November 18, 2021

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing Senate Bill 621 and **Senate Bill 622** in their entirety.

Senate Bill 621 would redistrict the legislative districts of the state and Senate Bill 622 would redistrict congressional districts.

I am vetoing both Senate Bill 621 and Senate Bill 622 in their entirety because I object to maps designed only to undemocratically serve the politicians who draft them. Elected officials are entrusted with the responsibility to work for the people they represent—both those who vote for us and those who do not. These maps were clearly designed to benefit one political party over another and would preserve undemocratic majorities in the state legislature and increase Republicans' chances of disproportionately winning six of Wisconsin's eight congressional districts.

The overwhelming preference among Wisconsin voters in that redistricting maps be prepared by a nonpartisan committee or commission. People want maps that reduce one-party unfair advantages and that support the creation of a government where elected officials are responsive to their communities and have to work to win their votes.

The People's Maps Commission was created in service of that ideal. Executive Order #66 created a nonpartisan commission comprised of nine citizens selected by a panel of three retired judges to represent Wisconsin's congressional districts, different walks of life, and different political opinions. The Commission spent more than a year doing their work over the course of more than 30 open meetings. They solicited feedback and input on how Wisconsin's existing electoral maps affected their communities, map-drawing criteria to consider and prioritize, and how maps following the 2020 U.S. Census could be improved to better reflect our communities and the people of our state. They sought out feedback on prepared draft sets of maps before and during several stages and iterations of the map-drawing process. The Commission completed the task of drawing lines with transparency, consensus, and voter input in mind, not partisan advantage.

In stark contrast, Senate Bill 621 and Senate Bill 622 only serve the elected officials who voted for them. These weren't the product of public input. There was less than one business day between the end of Republicans' deadline for public redistricting proposals and requesting bill drafts of their maps. And at the recent committee hearing on legislative maps, not a single person spoke in favor except two legislative leaders who drafted these unfair maps.

And that lack of public input shows. The Princeton Gerrymandering Project, which analyzes maps all around the county for partisan fairness, competitiveness, and geography features, gave these maps an overall “F” grade. These maps are based on the unfair maps from a decade ago, which have been called some of the most gerrymandered maps in the county. These unfair maps are irrefutable a rejection of what Wisconsinites have asked for—fair maps and nonpartisan redistricting.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 629: A shovel-ready workforce housing development site program

On February 22, 2022, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 629 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 803, and passed Senate Bill 629, as amended, on a voice vote, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 803.

On February 24, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 629 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/24/22, p. 866.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 629, S.J. 4/15/22, p. 935.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 629** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation to implement a program to certify active or prospective residential real estate development sites as shovel-ready if such sites meet several criteria. The bill would further require local governments and state agencies to expedite permitting for these shovel-ready projects.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to implementing a program that may detract from existing economic development efforts. While the bill is aimed at improving the availability of workforce housing in the state, it does not ensure that a shovel-ready site would address a particular or even generalized workforce housing need anywhere in the state. The proposed requirements for a minimum number of housing units and a maximum acreage per single-family housing unit, are insufficient to fill gaps in our workforce housing. In fact, the bill provides no means to require that a qualifying site be useful when considered on price or location.

Moreover, I object to requiring the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation to create a program without additional funding, which may force the corporation to shift resources and staffing away from established and tested economic development programs.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 695: The number of independent charter schools authorized by the College of Menominee Nation or the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe College

On February 22, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 695 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1) on a voice vote, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 804.

On February 23, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 695 by a vote of 61 to 35, A.J. 2/23/22, p. 838.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 695, S.J. 4/15/22, p. 935.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 695** in its entirety.

This bill eliminates the limit on the total number of charter schools (six) that may be authorized by the College of Menominee Nation and the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe College (collectively, tribal colleges).

I am vetoing Senate Bill 695 in its entirety because I object to further complicating our school funding system. Currently, funding for students in a tribal college–authorized independent charter school is provided through state General Purpose Revenue and a corresponding state general aid reduction to the resident school district of a child attending such a school. Although the resident school district is allowed to count the student in its membership for revenue limit and state general aid purposes, school districts are typically not fully compensated for the aid reduction in the following year and must levy additional property taxes to replace the full aid reduction to avoid having to reduce their budget. This funding system results in inconsistent financial impacts on property taxes and overall public–school resources with varying relative costs per pupil and relative property value per pupil.

Further, tribal college authorizers are presently legally able to authorize 200 percent more independent charter schools than they operated in the 2021–22 school year without necessitating this legislation, rendering it unnecessary.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 703: Classification of motor vehicle operators as independent contractors or employees

On February 15, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 703 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1) by a vote of 20 to 11, S.J. 2/15/22, p. 767.

On February 23, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 703 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/23/22, p. 837.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 703, S.J. 4/15/22, p. 936.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 703** in its entirety.

This bill would clarify the distinctions between an employee versus an independent contractor for motor vehicle operators, where the motor carrier deploys, implements, or uses motor carrier safety improvements.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to Legislature bypassing the Worker’s Compensation Advisory Council and the Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council’s processes, which play a critical role in recommending changes to current law and that are supported by key stakeholders from both labor and management representatives in their respective industries.

I also object to further weakening the distinction between independent contractors and employees as defined under worker’s compensation, unemployment insurance, and equal rights laws. Finally, this bill does not offer any additional protection from fraudulent misclassification of employees or independent contractors.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 707: Defining veteran in state employment relations

On February 15, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 707 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/15/22, p. 767.

On February 23, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 707 by a vote of 60 to 36, Paired 2, A.J. 2/23/22, p. 856.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 707, S.J. 4/15/22, p. 936.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 707** in its entirety.

The bill would change the definition of veteran in state employment relations statutes to include a person who was discharged from the military under other than honorable conditions for having not received a COVID–19 vaccine.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to expanding this definition to reward individuals that refused to follow an order. The U.S. Armed services make the determinations regarding what constitutes an honorable discharge and what does not. The military also directs countless requirements to ensure an equipped and prepared military, including numerous vaccine requirements. State law is currently clear—veteran status is extended under our state employment relations statutes to those honorably discharged from the U.S. Armed Services.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 708: Restrictive covenants applicability

On February 15, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 708 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/15/22, p. 767.

On February 23, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 708 by a vote of 60 to 36, Paired 2, A.J. 2/23/22, p. 856.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 708, S.J. 4/15/22, p. 936.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 708** in its entirety.

This bill would provide that if an employee is terminated for not receiving a COVID–19 vaccination or for failing to provide their vaccination status, any non–compete agreement signed by the employee is per se unreasonable, and thus illegal, void, and unenforceable.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature’s continued efforts to inject partisan politics and rhetoric into public health practices by preventing employers from making decisions that work for them, their customers, their workers, and their operations to help prevent and suppress the spread of COVID–19. As I have repeatedly indicated, we must be focused on following the science and the advice of public health experts, saving lives, and fighting this virus to keep Wisconsinites healthy and safe.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 900: Use of fill in commercial waterways and establishing shorelines of Great Lakes waters

On February 22, 2022, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 900 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 806, and passed Senate Bill 900, as amended, on a voice vote, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 806.

On February 23, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 900 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/23/22, p. 842.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 900, S.J. 4/15/22, p. 936.

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TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 900** in its entirety.

This bill would allow municipalities and private landowners to create title over formerly submerged lands in the Great Lakes waters—land which the state of Wisconsin currently holds in public trust for the people of Wisconsin—and certain commercial waterways. Under the bill, a person may submit an application to a municipality for a determination of the location of the proposed shoreline. The bill would require the Department of Natural Resources to adopt a determination by a municipality unless the department finds a municipality’s public interest determination lacked substantial evidence, or the property is not upland. The latter determination would not warrant a full rejection, but would rather require the Department to modify the proposed shoreline accordingly[.]

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to impinging on the constitutional public trust doctrine under Article IX, Section 1 of the Wisconsin Constitution. This bill would open the door to the whittling away of public land by allowing the transfer of public lands to private entities for private use without a rigorous review process. While I appreciate the Legislature’s efforts to clarify the law in this area, I believe that this bill as drafted would violate the constitutional public trust doctrine in certain applications and, in its current form, could likely lead to litigation.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 935: Election fraud and administration, absentee ballot regulation, personal care voting assistants

On February 22, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 935 by a vote of 19 to 14, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 807.

On February 24, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 935 by a vote of 56 to 38, Paired 4, A.J. 2/24/22, p. 866.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 935, S.J. 4/11/22, p. 922.

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TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 935** in its entirety.

This bill would make a series of changes to election administration, including banning the use of private grant funds, creating a personal care voting assistant in a nursing home facility during a pandemic, and disallowing clerks from curing errors on an absentee ballot.

The right to vote is fundamental to our democracy; it should not be subject to the whim of politicians who do not like the outcome of an election. Elected officials should not be able to abuse their power to cheat or control the outcomes of our elections or to prevent eligible voters from casting their ballots. This legislation is among many that have been sent to my desk during this legislative session, each passed under the guise of needing to reform our election system because elected officials in this state have enabled disinformation about our elections and election processes. I have and will object to each and every effort by this Legislature and its members to undermine our democracy, to erode confidence in our elections, and to demean and harass dedicated clerks, election administrators, and poll workers.

I am objecting to this bill in its entirety because I object to the ban on governments using private grant funds for election administration. Despite the COVID–19 pandemic, our state and local election officials performed admirably to ensure that in each of our communities, the 2020 elections were conducted as safely as possible. To assist with this unprece-

mented effort, many counties, towns, villages, and cities—both big and small, urban and rural—received nongovernmental grants, designed to help them offset new and unanticipated costs. In the past, local governments have used private grants for other projects, such as making voting spaces accessible to those with disabilities. Regardless of the source of additional funding for election administration, election administrators must always run elections according to state and federal law. By prohibiting donations or grants to election agencies, this bill unnecessarily restricts the use of resources that may be needed to ensure elections are administered effectively.

I also object to the prohibition on the current, long-standing practice of clerks correcting minor ballot defects, and believe that this bill will almost certainly result in valid ballots not being counted. The bill also creates severe penalties for a clerk making the most minor of corrections to an otherwise properly completed absentee ballot certificate, such as fixing the zip code. There is a clear difference between a ballot where the witness simply missed the zip code portion of the address, though the rest was complete, and a ballot that has no witness at all. This bill would treat all errors the same, requiring all ballots with even the most inconsequential mistake to either be discarded or sent back to the voter if the clerk has time. For example, a witness could fill out their entire name, street name, signature, and municipality, but forget to include their house number. This inadvertent omission by the witness would invalidate the voter's ballot.

Because the bill prevents any person but the voter or witness from correcting their respective mistakes, and because ballots will be discarded if not corrected, the method of notifying voters of an error becomes critically important. The bill establishes a method of notifying voters via the MyVote Wisconsin website and gives clerks the option to contact voters as well. While it may be practical for a clerk to call a small number of voters who have made an error, it is unrealistic for clerks to call large numbers of voters to warn them that their ballot is being discarded if they do not correct it. A person in a community with fewer people, and therefore, fewer absentee voters, may be likely to receive such a warning call, but a person in a more populated area is unlikely to be called and warned. Furthermore, by only requiring voters to be warned via a website that their vote will not be counted, this bill disadvantages populations throughout the state that may have difficulty using or accessing the Internet.

While this bill allows for the possibility that a voter could correct an error, the correction process requires multiple steps under a difficult timeframe, and it is an unnecessarily burdensome process for voters who did not commit fraud, but merely made a minor error in filling out their certificate. Surely disqualifying a ballot based on such trivial technicalities is contrary to the spirit of democracy and I cannot support this type of legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 936: Complaints filed with Elections Commission, audits of voting systems, and printing absentee ballots for recounts

On February 22, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 936 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1) by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 807.

On February 24, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 936 by a vote of 59 to 35, Paired 2, A.J. 2/24/22, p. 866.

On April 15, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 936, S.J. 4/15/22, p. 937.

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TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 936** in its entirety.

This bill would modify the way in which the Elections Commission processes sworn complaints, requiring the commissioners to determine how to proceed with the complaints, and would modify the procedures for the post-election audit.

The right to vote is fundamental to our democracy; it should not be subject to the whim of politicians who do not like the outcome of an election. Elected officials should not be able to abuse their power to cheat or control the outcomes of our elections or to prevent eligible voters from casting their ballots. This legislation is among many that have been sent to my desk during this legislative session, each passed under the guise of needing to reform our election system

because elected officials in this state have enabled disinformation about our elections and election processes. I have and will object to each and every effort by this Legislature and its members to undermine our democracy, to erode confidence in our elections, and to demean and harass dedicated clerks, election administrators, and poll workers.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature micromanaging the way the Elections Commission reviews and addresses complaints of elections violations, creating unnecessarily burdensome requirements. The Elections Commission has a clear responsibility to review election complaints in a timely manner. The 60-day timeline proposed by this bill is unnecessarily cumbersome. The commission and its staff require flexibility when responding to complaints as necessary and should not have to wait for a formal commission meeting to act whether that be to grant relief or dismiss a frivolous complaint.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 937: Status as an indefinitely confined voter for purposes of receiving absentee ballots automatically

On February 22, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 937 (as amended by Senate Amendments 1, 2, and 3) by a vote of 18 to 15, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 808.

On February 24, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 937 by a vote of 55 to 39, Paired 2, A.J. 2/24/22, p. 867.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 937, S.J. 4/11/22, p. 923.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 937** in its entirety.

The bill would narrow the definition of indefinitely confined status for purposes of voting and create an unnecessary application for claiming indefinitely confined status separate from the absentee ballot application.

The right to vote is fundamental to our democracy; it should not be subject to the whim of politicians who do not like the outcome of an election. Elected officials should not be able to abuse their power to cheat or control the outcomes of our elections or to prevent eligible voters from casting their ballots. This legislation is among many that have been sent to my desk during this legislative session, each passed under the guise of needing to reform our election system because elected officials in this state have enabled disinformation about our elections and election processes. I have and will object to each and every effort by this Legislature and its members to undermine our democracy, to erode confidence in our elections, and to demean and harass dedicated clerks, election administrators, and poll workers.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the manner in which it targets the most vulnerable voters. Indefinitely confined voter status was developed to help sick and disabled voters continue to exercise their constitutional right to vote. While disability rights advocacy groups have supported the need to clarify statutory language regarding indefinitely confined voter status, this bill goes too far by narrowing the definition such that a voter can only be considered indefinitely confined if they cannot travel independently without significant burden due to frailty, physical illness, or a disability that lasts longer than one year. There is no legal or medical justification for the inclusion of “longer than one year” in the definition, and it is also confusingly drafted. Those seeking to further disenfranchise vulnerable voters may seek to argue that the “longer than one year” applies to frailty and physical illness, as well as to disabilities. Rather than provide clarity to the law, this bill would create more confusion. If a circumstance or condition prevents a voter from traveling to the polls on Election Day, it is irrelevant how long the qualifying condition is expected to last.

The bill also requires individuals to fill out a new form that is separate from the regular absentee ballot form to claim indefinitely confined status. This creates another administrative hurdle and may cause confusion for the vulnerable people who need this option the most.

This bill makes it more difficult for elderly, disabled, or otherwise homebound citizens to vote absentee while doing little to improve the security of elections.

Respectfully submitted,
 TONY EVERS
 Governor

Senate Bill 938: Verifying citizenship of individuals on the official voter registration list and contents of operator's licenses and identification cards

On February 22, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 938 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 808.

On February 24, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 938 by a vote of 59 to 36, Paired 2, A.J. 2/24/22, p. 867.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 938, S.J. 4/11/22, p. 923.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 938** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Department of Transportation to facilitate searches in the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) system and to mark identification cards such as driver's licenses with a statement warning that the card is not valid for voting purposes.

The right to vote is fundamental to our democracy; it should not be subject to the whim of politicians who do not like the outcome of an election. Elected officials should not be able to abuse their power to cheat or control the outcomes of our elections or to prevent eligible voters from casting their ballots. This legislation is among many that have been sent to my desk during this legislative session, each passed under the guise of needing to reform our election system because elected officials in this state have enabled disinformation about our elections and election processes. I have and will object to each and every effort by this Legislature and its members to undermine our democracy, to erode confidence in our elections, and to demean and harass dedicated clerks, election administrators, and poll workers.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the manner by which it requires the Elections Commission to attempt to validate registered voters' citizenship status. There is no evidence of non-citizens voting in this state. There are current mechanisms in place to ensure that only citizens register to vote, and this bill creates procedures that not only fail to enhance those mechanisms but may inadvertently deprive qualified citizens of their right to vote.

Specifically, the bill directs the Elections Commission to use the SAVE system to verify citizenship for those who register to vote. According to a fact-finding report completed by the Governmental Accountability Board, the SAVE system is essentially a search engine that examines other federal government databases to help determine whether a person is eligible for government benefits. The system is limited to a select group of non-citizens, is not a comprehensive registry, and was not created for determining citizenship status for voting. For example, citizens are sometimes erroneously listed as permanent residents. Because updates are not frequent, it can also contain out-of-date information as to a person's current citizenship status, making it an impractical method of confirming citizenship.

The cumbersome bureaucratic process created in this bill does little to improve the integrity of the election system and increases the risk of disenfranchising a qualified citizen because of inaccurate or outdated federal information that was not collected for this purpose.

Respectfully submitted,
 TONY EVERS
 Governor

Senate Bill 939: Absentee ballot applications, absentee ballot transmission, delivery, and canvassing, and voter registration

On February 22, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 939 by a vote of 19 to 14, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 809.

On February 24, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 939 by a vote of 59 to 36, Paired 4, A.J. 2/24/22, p. 868.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 939, S.J. 4/11/22, p. 924.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 939** in its entirety.

This bill would make a series of changes to the process of applying for and receiving an absentee ballot, including new signature requirements for applications, restrictions on automatically receiving absentee ballots, and prohibitions on sending absentee ballots or applications before they are requested by voters, among others.

The right to vote is fundamental to our democracy; it should not be subject to the whim of politicians who do not like the outcome of an election. Elected officials should not be able to abuse their power to cheat or control the outcomes of our elections or to prevent eligible voters from casting their ballots. This legislation is among many that have been sent to my desk during this legislative session, each passed under the guise of needing to reform our election system because elected officials in this state have enabled disinformation about our elections and election processes. I have and will object to each and every effort by this Legislature and its members to undermine our democracy, to erode confidence in our elections, and to demean and harass dedicated clerks, election administrators, and poll workers.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to making absentee voting more difficult. The significant and unnecessary changes that this bill would impose would do nothing more than complicate an already working process and would result in the potential disenfranchisement of voters across Wisconsin.

Current law requires proof of identification when an individual first applies to vote absentee and thereafter requires the voter to resubmit proof only if the information changes. This bill would eliminate that common-sense exemption. The bill would also eliminate a voter’s ability to request automatic receipt of absentee ballots for all elections occurring in the voter’s municipality during the year of the application, instead requiring separate applications for each primary and associated election. As a result, under this bill, most individuals interested in voting absentee in multiple election cycles every year would need to repeatedly send in an application and a copy of their voter identification throughout the year, even if their information and identification had not changed. This proposed process lacks common sense, is unnecessarily burdensome, and is a ploy to make it more difficult to vote absentee.

Second, this bill would prohibit election officials from sending an absentee ballot application prospectively. This is an unnecessary limitation on the process, and would not apply to political actors, who would be allowed to send out absentee ballot applications prospectively—an inconsistency that illustrates the ugly political underpinnings of this bill.

Third, the bill imposes additional restrictions regarding who may return a ballot on behalf of a voter. This bill would require that if a person does not return their own ballot, they must enlist the assistance of a registered voter in Wisconsin who is either an immediate family member, legal guardian, or another designated person in writing and that individual is limited to returning only two ballots for any election for persons who are not family members. These needless restrictions could significantly reduce the circle of people who an indefinitely confined voter could turn to for help with absentee voting. For example, the bill would not allow a 16-year-old grandchild to help their grandmother return her ballot simply because the grandchild is not old enough to vote. A trusted neighbor would be limited to helping only two elderly or infirm neighbors return their ballots, but not a third. Instead of improving the election system, this bill would complicate our current absentee voting requirements for those who need absentee voting the most.

In addition, the bill contains a series of other objectionable, unnecessary changes which would result in more work for already overextended local election officials. For example, it requires election officials to repeatedly process absentee ballot applications for every election, even though they will already have previously entered information from those voters. It would also not allow a clerk’s initials on the absentee ballot to be preprinted or stamped. These changes do nothing to contribute to our already free and fair elections and are designed only to create more work for our election officials.

This bill fails to provide meaningful additional security for elections, is likely to disenfranchise numerous voters, and makes the absentee voting process less efficient and less user-friendly. For these reasons, I must veto it.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 940: Comparison of voter information on the state’s official voter registration list with information maintained by the Department of Transportation

On February 22, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 940 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 809.

On February 24, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 940 by a vote of 59 to 36, Paired 2, A.J. 2/24/22, p. 869.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 940, S.J. 4/11/22, p. 925.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 940** in its entirety.

This bill would modify the process by which the Elections Commission compares voter data against Department of Transportation (DOT) data. If a person has discrepancies between their DOT motor vehicle registration and their voter registration information, the Elections Commission could make only one small change to the individual’s voter registration. If there are two or more small discrepancies, the Commission would have to notify the voter that their voter registration would be deactivated within 30 days if the voter did not make edits.

The right to vote is fundamental to our democracy; it should not be subject to the whim of politicians who do not like the outcome of an election. Elected officials should not be able to abuse their power to cheat or control the outcomes of our elections or to prevent eligible voters from casting their ballots. This legislation is among many that have been sent to my desk during this legislative session, each passed under the guise of needing to reform our election system because elected officials in this state have enabled disinformation about our elections and election processes. I have and will object to each and every effort by this Legislature and its members to undermine our democracy, to erode confidence in our elections, and demean and harass dedicated clerks, election administrators, and poll workers.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the cumbersome and unfair process by which minor differences in a person’s voter registration record and their Department of Transportation record would result in the denial of the constitutional right to vote.

The Department of Transportation and the Election Commission databases were not constructed to capture identical information in every field. Innocuous and innocent discrepancies are common. For example, someone may put their full name “Robert” in one system and their more commonly used “Rob” in another. There is nothing unlawful or inaccurate about this; however, common discrepancies like this would nonetheless be flagged under this bill as grounds for the person to potentially have their voter registration deactivated and thus lose their ability to exercise their right to vote. This is not fraud, and yet the voter could have their constitutional rights impacted. The individual’s only recourse is to hopefully see a piece of mail warning them of a difference between their DOT and voter registry records and take action to address the discrepancies before deactivation.

Some states have automatic voter registration where DOT data is used as the basis of their registry. This is not the case in Wisconsin. I’ve proposed creating an automatic voter registration system in Wisconsin that would use DOT data as the basis for Wisconsin’s voter registry, which would have allowed this bill to function correctly, but the Republican-led Legislature eliminated this proposal. Until that system is in place, all this bill would do is disenfranchise Wisconsinites not based on their actual qualification to vote, but rather on how two separate state agencies record their personal information.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 941: Overseeing the administration of elections

On February 22, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 941 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 809.

On February 24, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 941 by a vote of 58 to 32, Paired 4, A.J. 2/24/22, p. 873.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 941, S.J. 4/11/22, p. 925.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 941** in its entirety.

This bill would create legislative oversight over the application of federal election guidance, prohibit the Elections Commission from acting pursuant to federal guidance without legislative approval, would require partisan legal representation at the Elections Commission, and would exempt legal counsel from the standard requirement that staff does not contribute to partisan candidates.

The right to vote is fundamental to our democracy; it should not be subject to the whim of politicians who do not like the outcome of an election. Elected officials should not be able to abuse their power to cheat or control the outcomes of our elections or to prevent eligible voters from casting their ballots. This legislation is among many that have been sent to my desk during this legislative session, each passed under the guise of needing to reform our election system because elected officials in this state have enabled disinformation about our elections and election processes. I have and will object to each and every effort by this Legislature and its members to undermine our democracy, to erode confidence in our elections, and to demean and harass dedicated clerks, election administrators, and poll workers.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature’s attempt to grant itself unchecked, potentially unconstitutional interference in federal guidance regarding elections. Lower units of government must adhere to federal law and guidance when implanting federal laws. This bill creates a system by which a single legislative committee could decide whether or not to accept federal guidance. It is absurd to think a single legislative committee should have a role in deciding whether or not to implement federal rules or guidance.

I also object to the creation of the requirement that legal counsel for the Elections Commission be partisan and exempt from political contribution prohibitions. Rather than increasing the partisanship at the Elections Commission, it is wise to continue to require staff to be nonpartisan so that they can focus on effective administration and not take into account what legal interpretation might be more beneficial for their respective political parties.

The bill provides the legislative branch with inappropriate influence over election administration and injects more partisanship into the Elections Commission, which has tried to administer elections as fairly and in as nonpartisan a way as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 942: State agency compliance with election laws

On February 22, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 942 by a vote of 19 to 14, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 809.

On February 24, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 942 by a vote of 59 to 35, Paired 4, A.J. 2/24/22, p. 869.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 942, S.J. 4/11/22, p. 926.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 942** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Elections Commission to submit an annual report to the Joint Committee on Finance and the Department of Administration regarding any failures by the Commission and the Departments of Transportation, Corrections, and Health Services to comply with election laws. The Department of Administration must then submit a plan to abolish positions and reduce funding from these state agencies as punishment.

The right to vote is fundamental to our democracy; it should not be subject to the whims of politicians who do not like the outcome of an election. Elected officials should not be able to abuse their power to cheat or control the outcomes of our elections or to prevent eligible voters from casting their ballots. This legislation is among many that have been sent to my desk during this legislative session, each passed under the guise of needing to reform our election system because elected officials in this state have enabled disinformation about our elections and election processes. I have and will continue to object to each and every effort by this Legislature and its members to undermine our democracy, to erode confidence in our elections, and to demean and harass dedicated clerks, election administrators, and poll workers.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to this flagrant violation of the separation of powers, which is a bedrock principle of democracy, and because of the significant threat this bill poses to independent elections. This bill would give a legislative body the authority to punish state agencies for “failures” to comply with certain provisions, or the nonpartisan Commission if it decides the Commission issued erroneous guidance. This bill gives the legislature the power to bypass the judicial system for any perceived legal misstep and to render its own judgements and punishments.

This bill fails to provide any meaningful improvement to our democratic voting system. Instead of strengthening our elections, it uses threats to eliminate funding and positions that are needed to help administer our elections while unconstitutionally giving the Legislature a role in election administration and taking power away from the executive and judicial branches of government.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

**Senate Bill 943: Requiring the Elections Commission to send guidance documents
to the Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules**

On February 22, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 943 by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 810.

On February 24, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 943 by a vote of 59 to 35, Paired 4, A.J. 2/24/22, p. 870.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 943, S.J. 4/11/22, p. 926.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing 2021 **Senate Bill 943** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Elections Commission to submit copies of documents and communications that it provides to local election officials that would qualify as guidance documents and submit this collection to the Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules weekly. It extends this same obligation to certain guidance documents previously issued. The committee would then determine if any of the documents constituted a rule as defined in statute and if so, require the commission to retract its guidance and promulgate an administrative rule instead.

The right to vote is fundamental to our democracy; it should not be subject to the whim of politicians who do not like the outcome of an election. Elected officials should not be able to abuse their power to cheat or control the outcomes of our elections or to prevent eligible voters from casting their ballots. This legislation is among many that have been sent to my desk during this legislative session, each passed under the guise of needing to reform our election system because elected officials in this state have enabled disinformation about our elections and election processes. I have and will object to each and every effort by this Legislature and its members to undermine our democracy, to erode confidence in our elections, and to demean and harass dedicated clerks, election administrators, and poll workers.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to giving a single legislative body the authority to hinder the normal day-to-day operations of the Elections Commission. The risk that this could be used by partisan politicians to interfere in elections administration is significant. This bill would require the Commission to be under constant monitoring and second-guessing by a partisan legislative committee, which could force the Commission to retract guidance, even accurate guidance, that it did not like.

To try and micromanage elections policy through the administrative rules process is an attempt at avoiding the checks and balances between the legislative and the Elections Commission and is inherently undemocratic, which is why the Wisconsin Supreme Court found a similar guidance document provision in 2017 Act 369 unconstitutional. This is yet another political bill that fails to improve our elections systems and instead tries to assert more partisan control over non-partisan elections administration. For these reasons, I must veto this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 945: Notifications to local elections officials and the elections commission regarding certain prospective jurors

On February 22, 2022, the senate passed Senate Bill 945 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1) by a vote of 21 to 12, S.J. 2/22/22, p. 810.

On February 24, 2022, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 945 by a vote of 58 to 35, Paired 2, A.J. 2/24/22, p. 870.

On April 8, 2022, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 945, S.J. 4/11/22, p. 927.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 945** in its entirety.

This bill would require each clerk of a circuit court to notify appropriate county clerks and the Elections Commission of any prospective juror whose returned juror qualification form includes information that indicates the individual lives outside the relevant circuit or is not a citizen. The commission would then deactivate the person’s voter registration and send notice to the appropriate district attorney if that person is registered to vote or had voted without the necessary elector qualifications or without satisfying residency requirements.

The right to vote is fundamental to our democracy; it should not be subject to the whim of politicians who do not like the outcome of an election. Elected officials should not be able to abuse their power to cheat or control the outcomes of our elections or to prevent eligible voters from casting their ballots. This legislation is among many that have been sent to my desk during this legislative session, each passed under the guise of needing to reform our election system because elected officials in this state have enabled disinformation about our elections and election processes. I have and will object to each and every effort by this Legislature and its members to undermine our democracy, erode confidence in our elections, and to demean and harass dedicated clerks, election administrators, and poll workers.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the use of a self-reported document unrelated to election registration being used as a method to deny a person their right to vote. This bill would use a process that relies on a questionnaire used for jury pool selection to help establish whether either of these things is true about an individual. People do not analyze and respond to jury questionnaires in the same way that they do when registering to vote. A person does not provide proof of residence when responding to the jury questionnaire. It is entirely possible that if a person does not fully understand what is being asked in a jury questionnaire, they may pay little attention and assume that if they spend regular time outside of their primary residence—such as being away for college—that this does not qualify them as a resident for the purposes of a jury pool.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor