



STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

Tony Evers, Governor
Kathy Blumenfeld, Secretary-designee

October 28, 2022

Mr. Edward Blazel, Chief Clerk
Wisconsin State Assembly
17 West Main Street, Suite 401
Madison, WI 53703

Mr. Michael Queensland, Chief Clerk
Wisconsin State Senate
B20 Southeast, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53707

Dear Messrs. Blazel and Queensland:

In accordance with s. 16.548, Wis. Stats., please find enclosed the quarterly report for the Wisconsin Federal-State Relations Office (Office). This report contains information on the activities of the Office and the status of federal legislation of concern to the State of Wisconsin for the third quarter of calendar year 2022.

Please contact me if you have any questions about the report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Blumenfeld". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathy Blumenfeld
Secretary-designee

cc: Governor Tony Evers

Enclosure

State of Wisconsin
Washington, D.C. Federal-State Relations Office
Quarterly Report
July 1, 2022 – September 30, 2022

The Office of the Governor and the Department of Administration continue to maintain frequent communication with Wisconsin's federal delegation, the White House, and other federal agencies regarding issues affecting our state, including supporting the continued economic recovery of Wisconsin, collaborating with other states to enhance Wisconsin's infrastructure and economic resiliency, and investing in our kids' education and mental health.

This quarter has seen the passage of multiple pieces of landmark federal legislation such as the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, and the CHIPS and Science Act. The Evers Administration also continues to be engaged on the implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. In addition to monitoring the progress of these legislative efforts, Governor Evers and our administration have been in frequent communication with members of our state's congressional delegation throughout the drafting of these pieces of legislation to advocate for and support measures that would benefit Wisconsinites. Following the passage of these major legislative priorities, Governor Evers has worked with both state and federal agencies in identifying opportunities available for our state, ensuring Wisconsin is applying to receive additional resources to support folks and families across our state, and working to implement other areas of these critical pieces of legislation.

Additionally, Governor Evers and our administration have taken steps to collaborate with other states toward improving infrastructure and economic opportunities in Wisconsin, while also working together to better the overall well-being of the region. Collaboration between our Midwest neighbors in investing in these infrastructure projects will serve to not only protect our economy now but will facilitate the economic growth of Wisconsin into the future. For example:

- Governor Evers joined Minnesota Governor Tim Walz in seeking federal funding through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to rebuild the John A. Blatnik Bridge between Superior, Wisconsin and Duluth, Minnesota. The bridge serves as a critical piece of infrastructure for that entire region.
- Governor Evers recently entered into two Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with other Midwest governors to announce the creation of the Midwestern Hydrogen Coalition and the Heartland Hydrogen Hub. Both the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 create programs and provide resources to encourage the production of clean hydrogen, and these partnerships will lead to a reduction of harmful emissions and an increase in economic opportunities in the state.
- Additionally, Governor Evers, along with governors of three other Midwest states, announced a collaboration to create the Lake Michigan EV circuit tour. This collaboration will feature a network of EV charging stations following Lake Michigan's pristine shoreline, creating a new eco-tourism attraction featuring one of Wisconsin's greatest natural resources. By creating this network through Wisconsin small communities, state parks, and other small businesses, this project will serve to

not only enhance Wisconsin's thriving tourism industry but also spur economic growth throughout the state.

The White House recently announced approval of \$40 million from Wisconsin's share of the American Rescue Plan Act's Capital Projects Fund for broadband projects. Expanding access to reliable, high-speed internet has been a top priority for Governor Evers and our administration. This collaboration between the U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury), Governor Evers and state and federal agencies, reflects the governor's ongoing work to ensure every Wisconsinite has affordable, accessible high-speed internet across our state. Treasury is completing their review of the remainder of the Capital Projects Fund dollars coming to Wisconsin.

Continuing Governor Evers' efforts to connect the dots and collaborate with partners at every level of government, our administration via the Wisconsin Department of Health Services has been working with state and federal partners to implement the new 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. Through this coordination and collaborative effort, Governor Evers and our administration were able to successfully implement and bring online this critical service, which has long been an area of priority and advocacy for U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin. Governor Evers continues to recognize the importance of mental health and looks forward to continuing to leverage these critical partnerships and to investing resources in expanding mental health services in Wisconsin.

Governor Evers joined Sen. Baldwin in a joint letter of support for Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs' (WDVA) application for the Hiring and Retaining Nurses at State Homes Grant. This included pledging a fifty percent match by WDVA in order to help address staffing shortages at the Union Grove and King Wisconsin Veterans Homes, which were exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic. This grant would aim to work with existing initiatives to help WDVA remain competitive with pay in the healthcare industry and ensure Wisconsin's veterans are receiving the level of care they deserve. Additionally, Governor Evers was proud to announce with the WDVA that over \$3.2 million in grant dollars from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs would be used to expand Union Grove's Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery, one of the largest veterans memorial cemeteries in the state. Governor Evers emphasized that this is an investment to ensure loved ones and future generations can continue honoring the memories of Wisconsin veterans.

Governor Evers has continued to respond to emergencies our state has faced with urgency, collaboration, and decisiveness. When the supply of gasoline was threatened due to a fire at BP's Whiting Refinery in Indiana, one of the largest refineries in the country, Governor Evers and our administration immediately coordinated with federal, regional, and private partners in order to prevent and minimize disruptions to Wisconsin's fuel supply. Governor Evers requested waivers from the Environmental Protection Agency to temporarily raise the Reid Vapor Pressure (RVP) limit for conventional and reformulated gasoline to allow for the immediate transition to winter blend fuel in order to take advantage of existing fuel stocks. This waiver was granted, and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection followed suit. The Evers Administration worked to secure a regional emergency declaration from the Federal Motor Carriers Safety Administration that allowed additional flexibility in transporting fuel to Wisconsin and other affected states. Due to Governor Evers and our administration's quick action, Wisconsin experienced little to no disruption in supply of gasoline to Wisconsinites.

Additionally, Governor Evers and our administration have worked hand in hand with federal partners in order to maintain the supply of dyed diesel fuel for Wisconsin's farmers. Wisconsin company US Venture's Green Bay terminal is the only terminal that supplies northeastern Wisconsin with dyed diesel fuel. Due to a pipeline closure to the Green Bay terminal in 2016, the only method to transport dyed diesel fuel to the Green Bay terminal has been by truck or by barge. US Venture was granted a waiver from the federal government that prevented the fuel from being taxed twice when transporting the fuel by truck, once at each terminal. Due to this waiver expiring at the end of 2021 and the IRS' refusal to extend the waiver, the only supply option is now limited to barge shipments. Governor Evers and our administration worked tirelessly to ensure no disruption would be felt by Wisconsin farmers. Governor Evers wrote letters to both President Biden and Treasury Secretary Yellen asking that a temporary waiver be granted to reenable truck shipments and facilitated conversations between US Venture, Treasury, Sen. Baldwin's office, and the White House. Governor Evers will continue to work with federal officials as well as private partners to ensure Wisconsinites are able to count on the fuel they need regardless of circumstance.

The Evers Administration and the Office of Federal-State Relations will continue its collaboration with its state and federal partners to ensure that the interests of the people of Wisconsin are heard, considered, and advanced by the United States federal government in Washington, DC.