



State of Wisconsin
2021 - 2022 LEGISLATURE

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**SENATE SUBSTITUTE AMENDMENT 1,
TO SENATE BILL 254**

May 11, 2021 - Offered by Senator FEYEN.

1 **AN ACT to amend** 70.511 (2) (a), 74.35 (5) (c) and 74.37 (4) (b); and **to create**
2 101.643 and 893.38 of the statutes; **relating to:** extension of certain approvals
3 and occupancy permits under the uniform dwelling code, renewal of certain
4 approvals that are subject to administrative, judicial, or appellate proceedings,
5 waiver of interest and penalties on late 2021 property tax payments, and waiver
6 of the timely payment requirement for filing certain property tax claims.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill allows the renewal of certain approvals that are the subject of administrative, judicial, or appellate proceedings that may result in the invalidation, reconsideration, or modification of the approval. The approvals may be renewed for an amount of time equal to 36 months plus the duration of the administrative, judicial, or appellate proceeding to which the covered approval is subject. The approvals covered under the bill are, with certain exceptions, 1) unexpired permits or approvals for construction projects issued by the Department of Safety and Professional Services, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Transportation, a political subdivision, or a special purpose district and 2) plats or certified survey map approvals. The renewal is exercised by the

holder of the approval notifying the governmental unit that issued the approval of the person's decision to exercise the renewal not less than 30 days before the expiration of the unextended term or duration of the approval. In general, the laws, regulations, ordinances, rules, or other properly adopted requirements that were in effect at the time the approval was issued continue to apply to the construction project, plat, or certified survey map during the period of renewal.

The bill also specifies that a dwelling that is occupied before undergoing all inspections for compliance with the uniform dwelling code may be granted an occupancy permit if the dwelling later passes a uniform dwelling code final inspection. Also, if occupancy for a dwelling unit is allowed prior to a final inspection, any missed inspection of the dwelling unit may not be listed as a finding on the occupancy permit or any other document granting occupancy.

Current rules promulgated by the Department of Safety and Professional Services generally allow a dwelling to be occupied without a uniform dwelling code final inspection if the inspection is not completed by DSPS or a municipality within five business days of an applicant's notification.

The bill also allows municipalities to waive interest and penalties on late installment payments of property taxes payable in 2021. Under current law, a late installment payment of property taxes is subject to interest and penalties, with the interest accruing from February 1 of the year in which the taxes are due. For property taxes payable in 2020, if an installment payment due after April 1, 2020, is late, current law allows a municipality to temporarily waive the interest and penalties in cases of hardship if the entire amount due is paid no later than October 1, 2020, and both the county and municipality adopt resolutions authorizing the waiver.

Under the bill, for an installment payment due after January 1, 2021, that is late, a municipality may waive the interest and penalties if the municipality makes a general or case-by-case finding of hardship and the total amount due is paid no later than October 1, 2021. A municipality may waive the interest and penalties only if the county first adopts a resolution authorizing the waiver and establishing criteria for determining hardship and the municipality then adopts a similar resolution, except that the bill authorizes the city of Milwaukee to waive the interest and penalties if the city adopts a resolution, without further action required by the county. Under the bill, interest and penalties will accrue from October 1, 2021, for any property taxes payable in 2021 that are delinquent after that date. The bill requires a county that adopts a waiver resolution to settle the taxes, interest, and penalties collected before August 1, 2021, on August 20, 2021, and to settle the remaining unpaid taxes, interest, and penalties on September 20, 2021. The August 20, 2021, settlement must be distributed proportionally to the underlying taxing jurisdictions.

The bill also modifies the provision in current law that generally requires a person to have paid his or her property taxes on time in order to file a claim to recover the unlawful imposition of property taxes, a claim for the excessive assessment of property taxes, or a claim to recover property taxes paid in protest due to an outstanding contested assessment. Current law provides an exception from this

requirement for taxes due and payable in 2020 if paid by October 1, 2020, or a later applicable installment date. The bill creates a similar exception for property taxes due and payable in 2021 so that the timely payment requirement does not apply to these taxes if paid by October 1, 2021, or a later applicable installment date.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 70.511 (2) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

2 70.511 (2) (a) If the reviewing authority has not made a determination prior
3 to the time of the tax levy with respect to a particular objection to the amount,
4 valuation or taxability of property, the tax levy on the property or person shall be
5 based on the contested assessed value of the property. A tax bill shall be sent to, and
6 paid by, the person subject to the tax levy as though there had been no objection filed,
7 except that the payment shall be considered to be made under protest. The entire
8 tax bill shall be paid when due under s. 74.11, 74.12 or 74.87 even though the
9 reviewing authority has reduced the assessment prior to the time for full payment
10 of the tax billed. The requirement to pay a tax timely under this paragraph does not
11 apply to taxes due and payable in 2020 if paid by October 1, 2020, or by any
12 installment date for which taxes are due after October 1, 2020, nor to taxes due and
13 payable in 2021 if paid by October 1, 2021, or by any installment date for which taxes
14 are due after October 1, 2021.

15 **SECTION 2.** 74.35 (5) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

16 74.35 (5) (c) No claim may be filed or maintained under this section unless the
17 tax for which the claim is filed, or any authorized installment payment of the tax, is
18 timely paid under s. 74.11, 74.12 or 74.87. This paragraph does not apply to taxes
19 due and payable in 2020 if paid by October 1, 2020, or by any installment date for
20 which taxes are due after October 1, 2020, nor to taxes due and payable in 2021 if paid

1 by October 1, 2021, or by any installment date for which taxes are due after October
2 1, 2021.

3 **SECTION 3.** 74.37 (4) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

4 74.37 (4) (b) No claim or action for an excessive assessment may be brought or
5 maintained under this section unless the tax for which the claim is filed, or any
6 authorized installment of the tax, is timely paid under s. 74.11 or 74.12. This
7 paragraph does not apply to taxes due and payable in 2020 if paid by October 1, 2020,
8 or by any installment date for which taxes are due after October 1, 2020, nor to taxes
9 due and payable in 2021 if paid by October 1, 2021, or by any installment date for
10 which taxes are due after October 1, 2021.

11 **SECTION 4.** 101.643 of the statutes is created to read:

12 **101.643 Occupancy before final inspection.** (1) A dwelling unit that is
13 occupied in accordance with local ordinances before undergoing all inspections for
14 compliance with the one- and 2-family dwelling code may be granted an occupancy
15 permit if the dwelling unit later passes a final inspection for compliance with the
16 one- and 2-family dwelling code.

17 (2) If occupancy for a dwelling unit is allowed prior to a final inspection, any
18 missed inspection of the dwelling unit may not be listed as a finding on the occupancy
19 permit or any other document granting occupancy.

20 **SECTION 5.** 893.38 of the statutes is created to read:

21 **893.38 Automatic renewal of certain approvals.** (1) DEFINITIONS. In this
22 section:

23 (a) “Challenged permit” means a permit or other approval to which all of the
24 following apply:

25 1. The permit or other approval authorizes a construction project.

1 2. The application for the permit or other approval includes a description of the
2 construction project.

3 3. The permit or other approval was issued by a governmental unit.

4 4. The permit or other approval has a finite term or duration and has not
5 expired.

6 5. The permit or other approval is the subject of administrative, judicial, or
7 appellate proceedings initiated by a person other than the holder of the permit or
8 approval that may result in the invalidation, reconsideration, or modification of the
9 permit or approval.

10 (b) “Challenged plat or survey” means a plat or certified survey map approval
11 that is the subject of administrative, judicial, or appellate proceedings initiated by
12 a person other than the holder of the approval that may result in the invalidation,
13 reconsideration, or modification of the approval.

14 (c) “Construction project” means organized improvements to real property that
15 include the construction or redevelopment of at least one building for occupancy.

16 (d) “Covered approval” means a challenged permit or challenged plat or survey.

17 (e) “Governmental unit” means the department of safety and professional
18 services, the department of natural resources, the department of transportation, a
19 city, a village, a town, a county, or a special purpose district.

20 **(2) AUTOMATIC RENEWAL.** A person who has received a covered approval shall
21 obtain an automatic renewal of the covered approval by notifying the governmental
22 unit that issued the covered approval of the person’s decision to exercise the renewal
23 not less than 30 days before the expiration of the unextended term or duration of the
24 covered approval. A notification under this subsection shall be in writing and shall
25 specify the covered approval renewed.

1 **(3) TERM OF RENEWAL.** The term or duration of a covered approval renewal
2 under sub. (2) is an amount of time equal to 36 months plus the duration of the
3 administrative, judicial, or appellate proceeding to which the covered approval is
4 subject. For purposes of calculating the duration of an administrative, judicial, or
5 appellate proceeding under this subsection, the proceeding begins on the date of the
6 initial filing leading to the commencement of the proceeding and ends on the date of
7 the final order disposing of the proceeding.

8 **(4) CHANGE OF LAW.** Except as provided s. 66.10015, the laws, regulations,
9 ordinances, rules, or other properly adopted requirements that were in effect at the
10 time the covered approval was issued shall apply to the construction project, plat, or
11 certified survey map during the period of renewal. This subsection does not apply
12 to the extent that a governmental unit demonstrates that the application of this
13 subsection will create an immediate threat to public health or safety.

14 **(5) REGULATION OF SAFETY AND SANITATION.** This section does not limit any state
15 or local unit of government from requiring that property be maintained and secured
16 in a safe and sanitary condition in compliance with applicable laws, administrative
17 rules, or ordinances.

18 **(6) EXCEPTIONS.** This section does not apply to any of the following:

19 (a) A covered approval under any programmatic, regional, or nationwide
20 general permit issued by the U.S. army corps of engineers.

21 (b) A covered approval that authorizes a water pollutant discharge under s.
22 283.31 or construction or operation of a stationary source under s. 285.60.

23 (c) The holder of a covered approval who is determined by the issuing
24 governmental unit to be in significant noncompliance with the conditions of the

1 covered approval as evidenced by written notice of violation or the initiation of a
2 formal enforcement action.

3 **SECTION 6. Nonstatutory provisions.**

4 (1) INTEREST AND PENALTIES ON LATE PROPERTY TAX PAYMENTS. Notwithstanding
5 ss. 74.11, 74.12, and 74.87, for property taxes payable in 2021, after making a general
6 or case-by-case finding of hardship, a taxation district may provide that an
7 installment payment that is due and payable after January 1, 2021, and is received
8 after its due date shall not accrue interest or penalties if the total amount due and
9 payable in 2021 is paid on or before October 1, 2021. Interest and penalties shall
10 accrue from October 1, 2021, for any property taxes payable in 2021 that are
11 delinquent after October 1, 2021. A taxation district may not waive interest and
12 penalties as provided in this subsection unless the county board of the county where
13 the taxation district is located first adopts a resolution authorizing such waiver and
14 establishing criteria for determining hardship, and the taxation district
15 subsequently adopts a similar resolution; except that a 1st class city may waive
16 interest and penalties as provided in this subsection if the city adopts a resolution
17 authorizing such waiver and establishing criteria for determining hardship, and no
18 action with respect to a resolution may be required of the county board of the county
19 where the 1st class city is located. A county that has adopted a resolution authorizing
20 the waiver of interest and penalties under this subsection shall settle any taxes,
21 interest, and penalties collected on or before July 31, 2021, on August 20, 2021, as
22 provided under s. 74.29 (1), and settle the remaining unpaid taxes, interest, and
23 penalties on September 20, 2021. The August 20, 2021, settlement shall be
24 distributed proportionally to the underlying taxing jurisdictions.

25 **SECTION 7. Initial applicability.**

1 (1) The treatment of s. 893.38 first applies to a permit or other approval or plat
2 or certified survey map approval for which the term has not expired and against
3 which administrative, judicial or appellate proceedings challenging the permit or
4 other approval or plat or survey map approval are pending on the effective date of
5 this subsection.

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(END)