

STATE OF WISCONSIN
Senate Journal

One-Hundred and Sixth Regular Session

FRIDAY, March 29, 2024

The Chief Clerk made the following entries under the above date.

CHIEF CLERK'S ENTRIES

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE GOVERNOR

The Chief Clerk records:

Senate Bill 222

Presented to the Governor on 3-29-2024.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

The following bill(s), originating in the Senate, have been approved, signed and deposited in the office of the Secretary of State:

<u>Bill Number</u>	<u>Act Number</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>
Senate Bill 462.....	249	March 29, 2024
Senate Bill 518.....	250	March 29, 2024
Senate Bill 525.....	251	March 29, 2024
Senate Bill 687.....	252	March 29, 2024
Senate Bill 789.....	253	March 29, 2024
Senate Bill 826.....	264	March 29, 2024
Senate Bill 833.....	248	March 29, 2024
Senate Bill 874.....	254	March 29, 2024

Sincerely,
TONY EVERS
Governor

Pursuant to s. 35.095 (1)(b), Wisconsin Statutes, the following 2023 Act(s) have been published:

<u>Act Number</u>	<u>Bill Number</u>	<u>Publication Date</u>
Wisconsin Act 248.....	833	March 30, 2024
Wisconsin Act 249.....	462	March 30, 2024
Wisconsin Act 250.....	518	March 30, 2024
Wisconsin Act 251.....	525	March 30, 2024
Wisconsin Act 252.....	687	March 30, 2024
Wisconsin Act 253.....	789	March 30, 2024
Wisconsin Act 254.....	874	March 23, 2024
Wisconsin Act 264.....	826	March 30, 2024

State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 21** in its entirety.

This bill would establish statutory limits for the value of personal property that may be possessed by persons in the care of the Department of Corrections.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to the Wisconsin State Legislature establishing limits on the value of personal property in state statute. Currently, these personal property value limits are set by the Department of Corrections through the administrative rules process. Codifying specific value limits for personal property in statute would make it more difficult to make adjustments in the future.

While I support increasing the personal property value limits, the administrative rules process provides more flexibility for the department to address any necessary changes in personal property limits when they arise. The Department of Corrections has begun the rulemaking process to update this rule and I look forward to working with the Legislature as this rule advances through the administrative rule process.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 52** in its entirety.

This bill requires the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection to create a voluntary registration program for commercial deicer applicators, defined as individuals who apply deicer for hire, but excluding municipal, state, or other government employees. The bill also requires the department to establish criteria for training commercial applicators in methods for snow and ice removal and deicer application that protect water quality. The bill

further requires the department to certify third-party providers of training that meets the criteria established by the department, maintain a list of registered training providers, and register a commercial applicator, for a period of five years, if the applicator successfully completes a training program approved by the department and passes an examination approved by the department. The department may revoke the registration of an applicator who fails to comply with the requirements of the program.

Additionally, the bill provides that a registered commercial applicator or an owner is not liable for damages arising from a hazard resulting from the accumulation of snow and ice on any private real estate maintained by the applicator when the hazard is caused by snow or ice and the applicator used methods that are taught in a training program approved by the department. Finally, the bill provides that, with respect to a commercial applicator that is not registered with the department, any evidence related to the program or the fact that the commercial applicator is not registered is inadmissible for any purpose in any judicial, legislative, or administrative action, proceeding or hearing.

I am vetoing this bill, which received bipartisan opposition in both chambers of the Wisconsin State legislature, in its entirety because I object to creating such a broad immunity from liability. As I have said before, I believe the presumption should be an open courthouse door to anyone seeking justice and an honest debate of the law of the land, and any immunity or deviation from that presumption should be tailored and finite. In particular, this bill rewrites the rules of evidence in such a way as to disallow evidence related to whether or not a commercial applicator is registered with the department. Generally, with limited exceptions, Wisconsin law provides that relevant evidence is admissible and irrelevant evidence is inadmissible. Under this bill, an unregistered commercial applicator could falsely claim the immunity provision in this bill, and that claim could not be rebutted, due to the fact that the relevant evidence is suppressed.

I am also vetoing this bill because I object to creating an unfunded mandate for the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. This bill requires the department to create a new registration program for commercial deer applicators. Under this new program, the department is required to establish criteria for training applicators, certifying third-party training providers, and maintaining a public list of registered training providers. The bill further provides the department the power to revoke registration. The bill does not provide any funding for the department to carry out these provisions, even as the original fiscal estimate provided by the Department of Natural Resources outlined ongoing costs.

Respectfully submitted,
 TONY EVERS
 Governor

**State of Wisconsin
 Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 139** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Department of Natural Resources to establish a statewide wolf population goal as a part of the Wisconsin wolf management plan.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety for multiple reasons. First, I object to requiring the department to establish a numeric population goal for wolves, as this does not consider the social, scientific, biological and legal complexities of a recovered wolf population.

I also object to limiting the department's flexibility to address regional or local issues through adaptive management strategies to achieve a healthy wolf population. Adaptive wolf management strategies have been successfully implemented in our neighboring states of Minnesota and Michigan and are successfully used in the Wisconsin deer and black bear management plans. This bill ignores the best available wildlife and social science in favor of a rigid, unscientific approach to wolf management.

Finally, modifications proposed to the state's wolf management plan should be considered as part of the established process of review and recommendation by the Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resources Board. This process is intended to ensure that modifications reflect the expertise and agreement of scientists, the Tribal Nations of Wisconsin, hunters, farmers, environmental organizations and the general public. This bill disregards years of extensive input and discourse that went into developing the recently revised wolf management plan.

Respectfully submitted,
 TONY EVERS
 Governor

**State of Wisconsin
 Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 158** in its entirety.

This bill would allow an individual without a permanent or training credential to apply for and receive from the Department of Safety and Professional Services a preliminary credential that permits the person to provide healthcare services through a healthcare employer. The preliminary credential may be granted to individuals who attest that they: (a) have not held a license, certificate, permit, or authorization to perform the services in Wisconsin or another jurisdiction; (b) have completed all required education, training, supervised experience, and other requirements for the permanent or training credential within the two-year period prior to applying for a preliminary credential; (c) have passed all examinations required to obtain a permanent or training healthcare credential from the

department (other than interviews or oral examinations); (d) have submitted an application for the related permanent or training healthcare credential to the department; (e) have not had a disqualifying arrest or conviction, including an attestation that they have not been convicted of any felony or of a misdemeanor involving bodily harm to, or sexual contact with, another individual; and (f) to the best of their knowledge, they have not had an arrest or conviction that would cause the department or credentialing board to deny their application.

The bill further requires applicants for preliminary credentials to be employed to provide services within the scope of the credential by a healthcare employer. An applicant's healthcare employer must provide the department with its national provider identifier and must attest that: (a) it has engaged the individual to provide services related to the credential for which the individual has applied; (b) the individual has, to the best of the employer's knowledge and with a reasonable degree of certainty, completed the education, training, experience, and examination requirements noted above; and (c) the individual has passed a background check performed by the healthcare employer that did not reveal any disqualifying convictions.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to potentially reducing patient protections from individuals who have a disqualifying criminal background by allowing unlicensed individuals to receive preliminary healthcare credentials based solely upon their own attestations and employer-conducted background checks. The department would have no way to discern the veracity of an employer-conducted background check and no ability to hold employers accountable for false or neglectful attestations. Under the bill, a preliminary credential must be granted prior to a thorough review of a credential applicant's background (and any attendant legal issues) by the department. I appreciate the need for Wisconsin to retain, train, and recruit more qualified healthcare workers across our state; however, I cannot support legislation that seeks to achieve this goal by reducing healthcare patient protections and putting Wisconsinites at serious risk across our state.

The bill, as amended by Assembly Amendment 1, also would ratify and enter Wisconsin into the multistate Social Work Licensure Compact, allowing social workers from compact member states to practice in other member states. It is unfortunate that the Wisconsin State Legislature chose to include in this bill, at a very late date and with no obvious substantive connection to the bill as introduced, an actual worthy proposal to enter the state into the Social Work Licensure Compact. That proposal, originally introduced as a stand-alone bill, would have responsibly eliminated barriers preventing social workers from practicing in compact states, in an effort to increase the number of social work service providers in Wisconsin. However, the potential harm to the state's residents from the preliminary credential proposal is too great. I therefore must veto this bill.

Respectfully submitted,
 TONY EVERS
 Governor

**State of Wisconsin
 Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 186** in its entirety.

This bill modifies the timeline for examination of commercial building plans by requiring the Department of Safety and Professional Services to allow building owners to schedule the next available plan examination appointment, by submitting complete plans to the department and paying all fees, or to schedule an appointment date in the future (a "schedule-in-advance" examination), by paying all fees and submitting the plans at least three business days before the appointment date. This bill also requires the department to allow building owners to identify any previously approved plans that are similar to the new plans submitted for examination and provides for potential refunds or partial refunds in the event of appointment cancellation. Finally, this bill creates exceptions for certain plumbing plan examinations based on the number of plumbing fixtures to be included in the building if plans are prepared by individuals holding certain credentials, including an architect or professional engineer, designer of plumbing systems, master plumber, restricted master plumber, and utility contractor.

I object to this bill because it may increase review times for commercial building plans by requiring two separate pathways for plan review with differing timelines while providing no additional resources or staffing to address the doubling of plan review processes. Under the bill, plan reviewers for schedule-in-advance examinations could receive plans only three business days prior to an examination appointment, which would require staff to be diverted from reviewing other plans to focus on performing evaluations of these plans. These plans may require additional information before being determined to be complete, and incomplete plan submissions may result in appointments being cancelled on short notice or appointments that result in a required second appointment once plans are complete. The current process includes a triage of submitted plans to determine completeness before scheduling appointments to ensure examination appointments are substantively useful.

Moreover, the department has demonstrated success in improving plan review timelines and efficiency using its current system. The Wisconsin State Legislature should allow the department to use its established expertise and experience in plan review to determine the scheduling system that maximizes the limited resources available to prevent project delays, especially insofar as the bill may increase such delays due to appointment cancellations or incomplete plan submissions. Further, if the Wisconsin State Legislature is serious about improving review times, I invite the Legislature to invest in the necessary staffing support to review plans.

Respectfully submitted,
 TONY EVERS
 Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 187** in its entirety.

This bill would expand the scope of examinations of essential drawings, calculations, and specifications that must be accepted by the Department of Safety and Professional Services with respect to public buildings, public structures, and places of employment when such examinations are performed by local units of government that are not appointed agents of the department. This bill would also expand the scope of reviews and determinations for variances that must be accepted by the department with respect to such buildings when performed by non-agent local units of government. This bill further repeals the requirement that local units of government that are appointed agents of the department and second-class cities that are certified by the department forward a portion of plan review examination fees to the department. Finally, this bill requires the department to submit a plan to the Legislature, by January 1, 2025, that addresses how the department will encourage cities, villages, towns, and counties to conduct commercial plan examinations and inspections, and how the department will increase the support for such functions.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the expansion of the approval authority granted to non-agent municipalities, which could put local plan reviewers and inspectors into situations where they feel pressured to choose between public safety or issuing a commercial building examination approval. I also cannot support increasing the burden on the department's already limited resources and staffing with unfunded mandates. The department has significantly improved plan review processes and timelines, and the Wisconsin State Legislature need not interfere with the department's successful efforts to efficiently and effectively improve its own operations.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 188** in its entirety.

This bill would codify in statute the current administrative rule that authorizes the Department of Safety and Professional Services to grant a building owner's request to start construction for footings and foundations prior to plan approval, and the bill adds underground and exterior plumbing as activities that may be included within such

permission. This bill also states that permission to start does not provide assurance that approval for the building will be granted or relieve a licensed architect or professional engineer of responsibility for the prepared plans under review.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the bill's failure to provide the department with the resources it needs to investigate and resolve the likely increase errors in building construction due to the expansion of permissible early-start building activities, which may negatively affect public safety as well as the financial status of the building owner. This bill may require diverting resources away from other vital areas of operation. Further, the department has demonstrated success in improving plan review timelines and efficiency. The Wisconsin State Legislature should allow the department to use its established expertise and experience in plan review to determine which activities are appropriate for early permission to begin construction.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 216** in its entirety.

This bill would allow all-terrain and utility terrain vehicles to be equipped with whip lights that emit any color in a fixed display.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to allowing all-terrain vehicles and utility terrain vehicles to utilize lights and light patterns that could be ambiguous. First, whip lights could be confused for lights emitted by law enforcement or emergency vehicles. Law enforcement vehicles frequently use non-flashing red and blue lights, and this bill would allow all-terrain vehicle and utility terrain vehicle operators to do the same. Second, because whip lights are visible from any direction, the bill would allow for nonstandard lighting configurations such as red lights from the front of a vehicle or white lights from the rear of a vehicle. Such nonstandard lighting configurations could make it difficult to ascertain the direction of travel of an all-terrain vehicle or utility terrain vehicle, increasing the risk of collisions.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 217** in its entirety.

This bill would allow one passenger to ride on an all-terrain or utility terrain vehicle that is not designed or intended for use by passengers if the passenger is in a second seated position.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to compromising the safety of riders and operators of all-terrain and utility terrain vehicles. As I stated in my partial veto of 2019 Wisconsin Act 183, if an all-terrain or utility terrain vehicle is not designed for passengers, then it should not be operated with passengers. I agree with law enforcement and the medical community that the safe transportation of passengers is essential to the prevention of injuries and fatalities associated with all-terrain and utility terrain vehicle usage.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

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

This bill would make changes to the Department of Natural Resources' aquatic plant management program. The bill would create a specific definition of a private pond and then provide exemptions from the permitting process for the application of a chemical treatment to certain private ponds if specific requirements are met, and for the application of certain biological agents and dyes to private ponds. Additionally, this bill would make aquatic plant management permits valid for not less than five years for private ponds that are larger than five acres in size.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to providing an exemption from the permitting process as outlined in this bill for certain private ponds. As I stated in my veto of 2021 Senate Bill 494, these exemptions could have a major impact on Wisconsin's waters. Prior to issuing a permit for chemical treatment, the Department of Natural Resources reviews the body of water to determine if there are any known endangered, threatened or special concern species located at the site. The department can then tailor the management plan to minimize the impact on these species. By removing the permit requirement, this valuable check would be lost, and important species may be inadvertently harmed. I also object to allowing the owner of one single parcel of land which a private pond abuts to conduct chemical treatment of a private pond without the consent of all owners of the parcels of which the private pond abuts when the private pond abuts multiple parcels.

The oversight provided through the permitting process is important, and I object to putting Wisconsin waters at risk by eliminating this protection.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 335** in its entirety.

This bill allows any school district to employ a school district administrator who does not hold any type of license from the Department of Public Instruction.

This concept is a non-starter.

Under current law, with very limited exception, every school district administrator in Wisconsin must hold an administrator license issued by the Department of Public Instruction, a license requiring the holder to maintain other licensure, have six semesters of teaching or pupil services experience-including over 540 hours of classroom teaching-and complete an educator preparatory program specialist degree or doctoral degree. We maintain these high standards for good reason: Wisconsinites entrust school district administrators with the important responsibilities of leading our local school districts and educating our kids. This bill would effectively eliminate all such requirements.

I am vetoing this Republican-backed bill in its entirety because I object to allowing any individual who has no license, no education, no training, no experience, no specific skillsets, and virtually no qualifications whatsoever to not only become a school district administrator but to come into everyday contact with kids in our schools.

As a governor who is a father and grandfather and former educator, principal, superintendent, and state superintendent, I cannot sign a bill that could have us entrust one of our most precious responsibilities to any given individual whose only qualification is a mere passing interest in education.

What's best for our kids is what's best for our state. We have a constitutional obligation to provide public education, and Wisconsinites expect our kids to be educated and taught by the best, brightest, and most qualified people. Our kids deserve nothing less.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 466** in its entirety.

This bill would prohibit a payment card network or its agent from requiring the use of a firearms code approved by the International Organization for Standardization as a merchant category code in a way that distinguishes a firearms retailer from general merchandise or sporting goods retailers.

The bill would require the Attorney General to investigate alleged violations of this prohibition and to pursue an injunction in the event of a continuing violation. It would also, subject to certain exceptions, prohibit a payment card issuer or payment card network or its agents from declining or refusing to process a lawful payment card transaction at a firearms retailer based solely on whether a firearms code is assigned. The bill would also prohibit state agencies or local governments from maintaining a list of people who own firearms, except for purposes of criminal investigations, prosecutions, or determining compliance with court orders or injunctions. Under the bill, the Department of Justice must ensure that records from background checks resulting from firearm purchases are not stored, maintained or formatted into a list that identifies firearm owners prior to the destruction of these records.

I am vetoing this bill for several reasons. First, I am vetoing this bill because I object to the Legislature inserting itself into the decision-making process of the private sector. Businesses use merchant category codes for various reasons, including (among other things) fraud protection, risk management, rewards, determining interchange rates and tax reporting. As they do for virtually every other business and industry, payment card issuers and networks are in the best position to determine which merchant category codes they use to conduct business. No other merchant category code is prohibited by state law. I am also concerned that carving out and prohibiting the use of merchant category codes for one industry, for political purposes, would set a precedent for other industries and undermine the business judgment of the private sector.

I am also vetoing this bill because I object to legislation that is confusing, contradictory and administratively burdensome for the private sector to comply with. Although the bill would not prohibit declining or refusing to process a lawful payment card transaction for reasons other than solely the assignment or nonassignment of a firearms code, the bill includes additional specifically identified exceptions, casting doubt on the intended scope of the prohibition. I am concerned that these exceptions are contradictory and not clear enough for businesses to comply with the bill and conduct their business.

I am further vetoing this bill because I object to the chilling effect that it could have on criminal investigations, prosecutions, and determining compliance with court orders. Despite the bill including these purposes as exceptions to the general prohibition on maintaining gun ownership lists, I am concerned that they are not strong enough to overcome the additional administrative burdens, which could cause second-guessing and paralysis that would jeopardize public and community safety.

Finally, I am vetoing this bill because I object to its encroachment on executive authority. The bill requires the Attorney General to take certain, specific enforcement actions, including pursuing an injunction against a person found to be violating the prohibitions against using firearms codes. By curbing the Attorney General's authority and discretion to pursue appropriate legal remedies, the bill could run afoul of the separation of powers under the Wisconsin Constitution.

I once again invite the Legislature to have a meaningful, thoughtful dialogue about common-sense solutions to address gun violence that will both respect and uphold Wisconsin's rights while keeping our communities safe.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 517** in its entirety.

The bill would prohibit the issuance of judicial complaints and John Doe proceedings if the district attorney refused to issue charges because the person to be charged has a privilege of self-defense or defense of others and there is no new evidence that the person was not acting in self-defense or defense of others.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety, which received bipartisan opposition, because I object to broadly restricting a courts' ability to issue criminal complaints in a process designed to hold individuals accountable when there is probable cause to believe a crime has occurred.

I have previously objected to proposals that would restrict the discretion of prosecutors and judges to meaningfully consider and address the circumstances before them. Further, I am concerned this bill would create an imbalance in the justice system and could infringe upon the rights of crime victims and their families under article I, section 9m of the Wisconsin Constitution by incentivizing accused perpetrators to claim self-defense to avoid accountability, thereby preventing crime victims from receiving justice they are duly entitled.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I have approved **Senate Bill 518** as 2023 Wisconsin Act 250 and have deposited it in the Office of the Secretary of State. I have exercised the partial veto with respect to section 3 as it relates to s. 238.145 (2)(a), (2)(c)2., (2)(e) and (2)(f).

This bill would create a program administered by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation to award up to \$2 million to a political subdivision (defined as a city, village, town, or county) to assist in the costs of redevelopment of University of Wisconsin branch campus buildings and facilities that will no longer be used for an academic purpose. The bill appropriates \$20 million GPR to the Joint Committee on Finance supplemental appropriation for the program. Under the bill, grants must contribute to the overall economic improvement and enhancement of the community. The bill requires the political subdivision to: i) submit community letters of support for the grant, ii) match 20 percent of the grant amount from local sources, and iii) submit a report to the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation and the Legislature detailing how grant amounts were spent. The bill also requires that the first award of up to \$2 million be made to Richland County, followed by awards of up to \$2 million to each of Fond du Lac, Washington and Marinette counties, before awards may be made to other political subdivisions. Further, the bill requires the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation to request that the Joint Committee on Finance supplement the appropriation created by the bill upon receiving a grant application by a political subdivision if the corporation determines that the grant requirements are met. The corporation must submit separate requests for each grant to be awarded.

I have exercised the partial veto with respect to section 3 as it relates to s. 238.145 (2)(a), (2)(c)2., (2)(e) and (2)(f) to remove restrictive requirements that would: i) prohibit the use of grants for the redevelopment of facilities that are or will be used for academic purposes, ii) create the 20 percent matching requirement, iii) require that grants be made to select counties before grants may be made to other political subdivisions and iv) require the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation submit separate requests to the Joint Committee on Finance for each grant to be awarded because I object to these unnecessary and restrictive provisions.

I trust local partners to know what is best needed to support economic development in their own communities and they should have as much flexibility as possible to make the decisions necessary. For example, some communities may consider using these facilities for academic purposes in partnership with local school districts or technical colleges, and the state grant program should be open to these partnerships.

I also am not interested in reinforcing the Wisconsin State Legislature's ongoing unconstitutional obstruction of basic government functions through delays at the Joint Committee on Finance. Similarly, I object to the requirements that a certain subset of counties must first receive their awards under the program before any others may receive funding, which could cause delays in certain counties receiving critical funds if the counties required to receive funding first do not

submit grant applications in a timely manner. Under the bill, the maximum amount that could be awarded to Richland, Fond du Lac, Washington and Marinette Counties is \$8 million, but the remaining \$12 million could not benefit any other counties in the meantime. As modified by my partial veto, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation would still be required to award grants to these counties, but other counties could still submit applications to receive critical resources without experiencing unnecessary delays.

Additionally, I object to the requirement that the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation must submit separate requests for each individual grant to be awarded, again creating unnecessarily cumbersome process that could delay efforts at redeveloping these facilities.

I support the efforts by the Legislature and stakeholders to provide these critical investments to local communities being adversely affected by branch campus closures.

Respectfully submitted,
 TONY EVERS
 Governor

State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 608** in its entirety.

This bill creates a provisional teacher licensing pathway for individuals who: (a) have worked as school district paraprofessionals in a classroom for at least three days a week for three consecutive school years; (b) have earned at least 60 credits or an associate degree from an accredited institution of higher education or technical college; (c) are enrolled in a teacher preparatory program; and (d) are recommended for a provisional license by the employing school's principal and the school district's administration. The bill prohibits the department from issuing a license under this pathway in certain subject areas. An individual granted this provisional license may only teach in the school district that recommended them and must be mentored by an experienced teacher in their first school year. The provisional license expires after five years, or earlier if the school district notifies the department or the department confirms that the employee left the school district or unenrolled from their teacher preparatory program.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to this bill potentially interfering with our administration's existing teacher apprenticeship pilot program. This collaborative effort between the Department of Workforce Development and the Department of Public Instruction is a more robust and supportive mechanism to accomplish the important goal of providing a way for paraprofessionals to enter the teaching profession. Paraprofessionals play a vital role in schools across Wisconsin, and their expertise and experience can play a critical role in our efforts to retain, recruit, and train talented individuals to work in our schools. Importantly, our effort to

increase the number of highly qualified teachers in classrooms and schools across Wisconsin would be greatly aided by the Wisconsin State Legislature approving my requests to provide meaningful, sustainable state funding increases for K-12 education in Wisconsin. I remain hopeful the Legislature will join me in the important work of doing what is best for our kids.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 613** in its entirety.

This bill would create a \$1,000,000 cap on the total noneconomic damages a person may recover from a commercial motor vehicle carrier in a tort action for loss, including injury or death, arising from an act or omission of one of its employees acting within the scope of their employment.

I am vetoing this bill for several reasons. First, I am vetoing this bill because I object to arbitrarily capping the noneconomic damages that a person may recover in tort actions involving a motor vehicle carrier. A fundamental principle of our legal system is that everyone is entitled to remedies in the law for all injuries, and when it comes to remedy, the law should redress a party's injury, not repress an injured party.

I am also vetoing this bill because I object to legislation that violates constitutional principles. A fundamental principle, outlined in article I, section 9 of the Wisconsin Constitution, is that everyone is entitled to remedies in the law for all injuries. I am concerned this bill fundamentally violates this principle as well as equal protection guarantees and due process rights under the United States and Wisconsin Constitutions.

Finally, I am vetoing this bill because I object to legislation that is inconsistent with current law. Even if the bill withstood constitutional scrutiny, its incongruity with current law will create implementation issues and make it subject to litigation. For instance, unlike current statutory caps, the bill does not define "noneconomic damages," it does not address or contemplate multiple parties or occurrences and it does not cross reference wrongful death actions. Courts would almost certainly face challenges implementing the bill's provisions as this incongruity welcomes continuous litigation.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 617** in its entirety.

This bill creates a requirement for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to issue unique license plates to identify hybrid and nonhybrid electric vehicles powered by greater than 50 volts as electric vehicles.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating requirements that are duplicative, unworkable, and may run counter to industry best practices. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has already begun issuing stickers identifying hybrid and nonhybrid electric vehicles regardless of voltage power under criteria that are workable for the department. This identifier, which accurately identifies hybrid and nonhybrid electric vehicles by affixing the sticker to the vehicle's existing license plate, allows first responders to properly assess the risks these vehicles pose during an emergency.

Additionally, the department does not have a reliable way to identify the vehicles that would be issued the type of license plates required under the bill. Further, because license plates are manufactured and stocked in advance of being assigned to a vehicle so applicants can receive license plates in a timely manner, the requirements in this bill would require a significant increase in the number of license plates the department procures from the Department of Corrections' Bureau of Correctional Enterprises, increasing costs and complexity to address a problem the Legislature and I have already worked to address in my most recent state budget.

Finally, adding a second set of stacked lettering on a vehicle license plate violates standards issued by the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators, designed to ensure readability and safety for those who need to be able to quickly and easily read or scan license plates, such as first responders and law enforcement.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 641** in its entirety.

This bill would repeal the current prohibition against selling, transporting, manufacturing, possessing or going armed with electric weapons, and in its place would prohibit their possession by those who generally may not possess a firearm.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to further enabling dangerous weapons to be possessed and used in Wisconsin. Current law already provides numerous exceptions to the prohibition against electric weapons: if a person wants to secure an electric weapon for self-defense in their home, there is an exception; if a person wants to carry one for self-defense and obtains a license to carry a concealed weapon, there is an exception. I cannot support legislation that will further enable dangerous weapons to be carried and used-and perhaps concealed and possessed in public-by individuals who may have little to no training, potentially endangering Wisconsin's kids, families, and communities and making them less safe.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 667** in its entirety.

This bill would generally create domestic asset preservation trusts as a new type of trust. The bill requires - such trusts to contain a spendthrift provision, but the bill modifies current trust law with respect to these provisions to permit the settlor placing assets in the trust to also be the beneficiary of the trust. The bill also modifies current trust law by generally prohibiting creditor claims: (1) against a person transferring assets into a domestic asset preservation trust; (2) against the trustee of such a trust; (3) or against any assets held by such a trust, except in limited circumstances. These limited circumstances include actions taken against asset transfers that were made with the intent to hinder, delay, or defraud a creditor, and actions brought by creditors within a specified period of time from the date of the asset transfer.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to allowing domestic asset preservation trusts to be created under Wisconsin law. I am concerned these trusts are likely to be a tool largely used by wealthy individuals to shield their assets from creditors while perpetuating dynastic, intergenerational transfers of wealth. The general, underlying principle of current trust law that prevents a settlor-someone who creates a trust-from being a beneficiary of said trust to receive asset protection from creditors is sound and informed by experience. Further, the bill provisions purportedly aimed at tempering some of the risks associated with these trusts are insufficient.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 688** in its entirety.

This bill applies competitive bidding requirements to school district contracts with an estimated cost greater than \$150,000 for supplies, materials, construction, repair, remodeling, or improvement of a public school building or facility. The bill requires a school district to advertise and notice contracts up for bid and accept the lowest responsible bidding without preference for geographic location or other criteria. The bill also provides an exception to competitive bidding requirements for a school board that passes a resolution declaring that the public health or welfare of the school district is endangered by damage or threatened damage to a building or facilities.

Further, this bill increases the estimated cost threshold for county and municipal public work projects for which competitive bidding is required. The bill also adds competitive bidding requirements for certain county and municipal public highway projects. Additionally, this bill clarifies and expands exceptions to procurement requirements for projects that involve donated materials or construction or volunteer labor.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to undermining the local decision of a school board to choose voluntary collaboration with local contractors to build the best value projects to support students. School boards under current law may use competitive bidding if they deem it appropriate. School districts currently choose different methods to provide the best projects for their students and communities, and the state should not interfere in this local decision making.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

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

This bill would allow a juvenile court to impose restrictions on a juvenile's conduct during the time between a plea hearing and the conclusion of any fact-finding or disposition hearing for youth not being held in custody.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to codifying criminal procedural concepts into the Juvenile Justice Code. The Juvenile Justice Code reflects its origin in the Children's Code and recognizes that children are not adults. Currently, under both the Children's Code and the Juvenile Justice Code, if a youth is in custody and the court finds that they should continue to be in custody, it may place them with a parent or other responsible person and may

impose reasonable restrictions on the youth's travel, association with others or places of abode during the period of placement. For pretrial releases under the Criminal Procedure Code, courts may impose conditions reasonably necessary to secure appearance in court, protect members of the community from serious harm or prevent witness intimidation. However, unlike these current predisposition and pretrial situations, the bill would give judges the discretion to impose any reasonable restriction after a plea and through the conclusion of any fact-finding or disposition hearing. I am concerned this bill provides no criteria for a court to consider when imposing restrictions, does not require that the restriction be related to the alleged offense, lacks clarity regarding how any restrictions would be enforced, and is broad and unmoored from any justice or public safety purpose.

Our youth and criminal justice systems must be reformed using data-driven and evidence-based approaches that help keep our communities safe while improving outcomes with better cost efficiency. I share the research-based concerns expressed by the Department of Children and Families that the broad, untargeted court conditions this bill would allow at the predisposition stage may increase involvement in the youth justice system and increase the risk of reoffending.

I continue to welcome meaningful conversations with the Wisconsin State Legislature about reforming our youth and adult justice systems through evidence-based, data-driven solutions that reduce recidivism and improve public safety, bolster our justice system workforce, and ensure our communities have the resources they need to invest in public safety across our state.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 916** in its entirety.

This bill would establish a process that must be followed when the federal government or certain private nonprofit voluntary agencies contact or are contacted by a local government employee or officer regarding potential refugee resettlements in a local governmental unit.

Following prescribed timelines, the bill would require the chief elected official in a local governmental unit to be notified of any such contact, and this chief elected official would then be required to notify every chief elected official and clerk in any local governmental unit within 100 miles of the office of the clerk for the local governmental unit providing such notice. The governing body of each of those local governmental units must then designate a representative to participate in consultations with the federal government or private nonprofit voluntary agencies and to participate in

county refugee resettlement committees. The bill further establishes a timeline and notification requirements for public hearings and committee meetings that must be held on a local and county level toward the goal of making a recommendation as to whether the local unit of government should pass a resolution regarding its position on the proposed refugee placement. The county refugee resettlement committee shall then provide each designee with guidance on the potential impacts on the local agencies and on the potential timelines for the resettlement, and each designee shall submit a written report to its local governmental unit.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating a consultation process that duplicates and unnecessarily complicates the existing federally mandated consultation process that is already in place.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 917** in its entirety.

This bill permits teacher preparatory programs to require between one and four semesters of student teaching (instead of only one under current law), provided the institution of higher education that offers the program awards general education credit for the second, third, and fourth full semesters. Additionally, the bill requires the Department of Public Instruction to separately report teacher preparatory program results for: (1) all students and graduates of the program; (2) students and graduates of the program who completed one semester of student teaching; and (3) students and graduates of the program who completed more than one semester of student teaching. The bill also requires the department to create a teacher apprenticeship program for students participating in a teacher preparatory program that must include between two and four semesters of in-classroom student teaching.

I object to this bill because it is unnecessary. Our administration has already created existing teacher apprenticeship pilot program, a collaborative effort between the Department of Workforce Development and the Department of Public Instruction, and this bill will interfere with that pilot. The bill creates uncertainty with Department of Public Instruction student teaching requirements and undercuts the Department of Workforce Development's authority to approve and oversee apprenticeship programs, something they historically have managed with great success. It also may cause confusion regarding when and how the State Superintendent can recognize longer periods of student teaching in non-apprenticeship teacher preparatory programs.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

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

This bill modifies the state's building program processes in several ways. This bill significantly limits the Building Commission's authority to authorize limited program or project changes if the commission determines that unanticipated project or bidding conditions require the change to effectively and economically construct the project. Under the bill, the Building Commission would need to seek approval by the Wisconsin State Legislature's Joint Finance Committee if the project cost increases exceed a certain threshold, unless the budget increase is funded solely from program revenue, gifts, grants, federal funds, or other sources. The bill also requires the Department of Administration to submit to the Joint Committee on Finance quarterly reports that identify Building Commission projects for which the Building Commission approved a budget increase or which department estimates will need a budget increase, and agencies submitting project reports to the Building Commission would also be required to submit these reports to the Joint Committee on Finance.

In addition, when an architect or engineer selection committee is created for a building project, the committee would only be required to use a request for proposal process to select an architect or engineer for projects with estimated costs of \$15 million or more (up from the current threshold of \$7.4 million), and, if the construction project has an estimated cost of less than \$2 million, the committee would not be able to refuse to select an architect or engineer because the architect or engineer is the sole responsible architect or engineer at their firm. The bill allows the Department of Administration to increase this threshold up to \$15 million.

The bill creates a new exception to single prime contracting for high-dollar building projects. The bill also provides that a bidder or potential bidder may submit questions to the Department of Administration concerning a project up until two days prior to the end of the bidding period, and the department may issue addenda at any time during the bidding period to modify or clarify the project specifications or extend the bidding period.

The bill also requires the Department of Administration and the Board of Regents to collaborate with energy service companies to identify and execute pilot projects using financing provided by the companies to upgrade facilities, reduce deferred maintenance, and increase sustainability.

Under the bill, each state contract for construction work would be required to state which party is responsible for paying project utility service connection charges and which

party is responsible for paying for the costs related to the consumption of utility services at the project site.

The bill also creates a timeline for the Claims Board to hear and make a final determination for claims referred to the board related to infrastructure contracts with the Department of Transportation or construction contracts with the Department of Administration or the Board of Regents.

Finally, the bill transfers \$32 million from the general fund to the state building trust fund in fiscal year 2023-24.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature removing the Building Commission's authority to adapt and respond to the unanticipated needs of building projects that help ensure efficient completion. I further object to the Legislature's ongoing efforts to unconstitutionally obstruct basic government functions through the use of legislative vetoes, as this bill would surely further enable.

The process created in this bill would result in a minimum delay of 14 working days while the Joint Committee on Finance considers a budget increase through a passive review approval process. If a single committee member objects to the budget increase for any reason, then the delay is likely to be far more significant given the committee's infrequent scheduling in recent years. The additional review and approval process created under this bill is likely to create significant delays in the building program and, ironically, result in increased project costs instead. For example, as of this writing, Wisconsinites have waited over 250 days for the Joint Finance Committee to release \$125 million to address PFAS contamination across Wisconsin, which was already approved through the biennial budget process last July. I cannot support legislation that would enable the Joint Finance Committee to substantially delay and disrupt state's critical building program, potentially causing increased costs to taxpayers.

In addition, as I have done previously, I object to the risk posed to the state by allowing multi-million dollar building projects to be awarded to firms with only one responsible architect or engineer.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

**State of Wisconsin
Office of the Governor**

March 29, 2024

The Honorable, the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 933** in its entirety.

This bill would modify current law prohibiting transplant hospitals from taking certain actions affecting the organ transplantation and donation process solely based on an individual's disability to add an individual's vaccination status as a prohibited basis for such actions. The bill also adds vaccination status as a prohibited basis for the refusal of

insurance coverage for any procedure associated with transplantation or evaluation for transplantation, and the bill prohibits discrimination against an individual in any matter relating to organ transplantation or donation on the basis of vaccination status.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Wisconsin State Legislature restricting how transplant hospitals and their medical professionals determine how to best serve their uniquely vulnerable patients. Transplant hospital policies and procedures are carefully crafted to give patients the best chance at avoiding unnecessary illness or death during the transplantation and organ donation process. This bill would increase the vulnerability of patients whose immune systems are suppressed via anti-rejection medication

by allowing avoidable risks into the transplantation process, and the bill would impede the ability of trained and trusted medical professionals to determine how to best serve their patients.

Medical professionals have an ethical obligation to care for the wellbeing of their patients. The COVID-19 vaccine has proven itself to save lives, especially among the most vulnerable in our state, and has been widely mandated to protect those going through the difficult organ transplantation process.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor