

GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

December 6, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 396** in its entirety.

Under current law, the Wisconsin Elections Commission is required to establish by administrative rule the fee for obtaining a copy of the official voter registration list. The fees are charged based on the size of the request. The Commission is required to set the fee after consultation with county and municipal election officials based on the cost to maintain and produce the information at both the state and local levels. This bill would repeal the Commission's authority to set the fee amount by administrative rule and prevent the price for obtaining an electronic copy of the official voter registration list from exceeding \$250, regardless of the size of the transaction request.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the way in which this could significantly hinder and reduce services currently provided to Wisconsin clerks and voters by effectively limiting the State's ability to cover the costs of maintaining and securing Wisconsin's voter registration and election administration system.

The fees set by administrative rules as required under current law are designed to cover the costs of maintaining and securing Wisconsin's voter registration and election administration system. According to the Commission, "no other state offers all the features available in Wisconsin," which offers a "level of service and flexibility unmatched by any other state." Further, this current system ensures the vast majority of requesting individuals and organizations can access relevant information without overly burdensome fees. Indeed, the Commission reports over 90 percent of transactions since 2019 have not exceeded \$250.

Wisconsin has one of the most robust, convenient, and customizable online portals for voter registration information in the country. This bill would likely result in a \$500,000 decline in funding, representing a budget cut of nearly one-third without providing any replacement funding to support and maintain current operations. I decline to put at risk a critical component of maintaining and securing Wisconsin's voter registration and election administration system as this bill would have me do.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor