

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