

GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 22, 2021

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 241** in its entirety.

This bill requires the Governor to use \$500,000,000 of federal funds from the state allocation of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) to pay down \$250,000,000 in transportation revenue bond debt and \$250,000,000 in general obligation debt or, if these uses not allowed by the American Rescue Plan Act, to pay for \$500,000,000 in building commission approved capital projects in lieu of bonding.

I object to this bill and am vetoing it because none of the uses for the ARPA funds outlined in this bill are expressly authorized under ARPA. While final guidance by the federal government has not yet been issued on the use of the funds, the bill's allocation of \$500,000,000 to uses that could be prohibited or partially prohibited by the federal government means that the state may end up having to repay some, or possibly a large, portion of this \$500,000,000 to the federal government. This is an unnecessary risk.

I also object to the bill because it limits the ability to use federal funds with the flexibility necessary to confront the variety of challenges posed by the 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 under Section 16.54 of the Wisconsin Statutes to oversee use of federal funds and will allocate these funds in a manner that is transparent and consistent with both Wisconsin's needs and federal law.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor