

GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 15, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 939** in its entirety.

This bill would make various changes to the unemployment insurance law. Wisconsin businesses and employers are an essential part of the success of our unemployment system and are already required to submit information to the Department of Workforce Development. The Department would also be required to create online reporting mechanisms for employers' increased reporting requirements. This bill requires employers to "provide a full and prompt response" for benefit claims as to eligibility questions and report to the Department regarding various conduct of a job applicant. The bill specifies that the first such report regarding an individual should be disregarded for purposes of determining unemployment benefit eligibility if the claimant can demonstrate good cause for any failure to interview or accept a job offer. Generally, though, reports under the bill would render an individual ineligible for benefits during a benefit week. The Department would be required to investigate each report and provide the results of such investigations and actions taken to the Unemployment Insurance Council and the appropriate standing committees of the Legislature. The bill also adds duplicative requirements, which are largely already provided for under current law.

During the coronavirus pandemic, individuals and families across our state relied on unemployment benefits to make ends meet. Now, Wisconsin has returned to work. Our state's unemployment rate is at historic lows, and we have the fewest number of people unemployed ever in our state's history. I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to adding more barriers for individuals applying for and receiving economic assistance through programs largely designed to provide support when individuals and families are experiencing economic hardship. Moreover, state law already has protections in place to prevent the types of fraudulent activity this bill purports to prevent. Under current law, unemployment claimants must already be able and available for work, must actively look for work and provide documentation for completing four work search actions per week, and must report weekly whether they have refused job offers or job referrals. Failure to comply with these requirements could result in the ending of benefits, overpayments, or additional penalties. The Legislature might well have been informed about these existing requirements had this legislation been developed through the

Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council's agreed-upon bill process or in consultation with the Council and the Department.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor