



LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

Executive Vetoes of Bills Passed by the 2023 Legislature Excluding the Executive Budget Act



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I. INTRODUCTION

This report contains the veto messages of Governor Tony Evers affecting all legislation, except the executive budget act, 2023 Wisconsin Act 19, as passed by the 2023 Wisconsin Legislature. (See *LRB Reports*, volume 7, number 7, for the partial vetoes of 2023 Senate Bill 70.)

Status of legislation

During the 2023–24 legislative biennium, 2,305 bills were introduced, of which 272 were enacted into law, 73 were vetoed in full—including 2023 September Special Session Senate Bill 1—and four were vetoed in part.

Report format

This report provides the following information:

1. The legislative action for each fully or partially vetoed bill, including the vote for final passage in each house and the page number of the loose-leaf journals in each house referring to the vote. “S.J.” stands for Senate Journal; “A.J.” stands for Assembly Journal.
2. The text of the governor’s veto message for each vetoed bill.
3. For partially vetoed bills, the sections of the act in which the veto occurred, with the vetoed material indicated by a distinguishing shading.

II. HISTORY OF VETO PROCESS

Wisconsin governors have had the constitutional power to veto bills in their entirety since the ratification of the Wisconsin Constitution in 1848. In November 1930, the people of Wisconsin approved a constitutional amendment granting the governor the additional power to veto appropriation bills in part. The new partial veto authority was used immediately beginning with the 1931 session.

Article V, section 10, of the Wisconsin Constitution grants the veto power to the governor. The following is reprinted from the *Annotated Wisconsin Constitution*, published April 4, 2024:

Governor to approve or veto bills; proceedings on veto. SECTION 10. [*As amended Nov. 1908, Nov. 1930, April 1990 and April 2008*]

- (1) (a) Every bill which shall have passed the legislature shall, before it becomes a law, be presented to the governor.
 - (b) If the governor approves and signs the bill, the bill shall become law. Appropriation bills may be approved in whole or in part by the governor, and the part approved shall become law.
 - (c) In approving an appropriation bill in part, the governor may not create a new word by rejecting individual letters in the words of the enrolled bill, and may not create a new sentence by combining parts of 2 or more sentences of the enrolled bill.
- (2) (a) If the governor rejects the bill, the governor shall return the bill, together with the objections in writing, to the house in which the bill originated. The house of origin shall enter the objections at large upon the journal and proceed to reconsider the bill. If, after such reconsideration, two-thirds of the members present agree to pass the bill notwithstanding the objections of the governor, it shall be sent, together with the objections, to the other house, by

which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two-thirds of the members present it shall become law.

(b) The rejected part of an appropriation bill, together with the governor's objections in writing, shall be returned to the house in which the bill originated. The house of origin shall enter the objections at large upon the journal and proceed to reconsider the rejected part of the appropriation bill. If, after such reconsideration, two-thirds of the members present agree to approve the rejected part notwithstanding the objections of the governor, it shall be sent, together with the objections, to the other house, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two-thirds of the members present the rejected part shall become law.

(c) In all such cases the votes of both houses shall be determined by ayes and noes, and the names of the members voting for or against passage of the bill or the rejected part of the bill notwithstanding the objections of the governor shall be entered on the journal of each house respectively.

(3) Any bill not returned by the governor within 6 days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to the governor shall be law unless the legislature, by final adjournment, prevents the bill's return, in which case it shall not be law. [*1905 J.R. 14, 1907 J.R. 13, 1907 c. 661, vote Nov. 1908; 1927 J.R. 37, 1929 J.R. 43, vote Nov. 1930; 1987 A.J.R. 71, 1989 S.J.R. 11, vote April 1990; 2005 J.R. 46, 2007 J.R. 26, vote April 2008*]

III. BILLS VETOED IN FULL

Assembly Bill 34: Restrictions on baiting deer in counties based on chronic wasting disease or bovine tuberculosis

On January 25, 2024, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 34 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/25/24, p. 597.

On March 12, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 34 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 3/12/24, p. 912.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 34, A.J. 3/29/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 34** in its entirety.

This bill requires county feeding bans issued by the Department of Natural Resources be issued based on confirmed positive tests for chronic wasting disease or bovine tuberculosis in free-roaming wild animals only. Currently, the department may issue these bans based on positive tests in both free-roaming and captive animals.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to limiting the ability of the department to reduce the spread of chronic wasting disease and bovine tuberculosis in Wisconsin. This bill disregards scientific research that suggests that chronic wasting disease can be transmitted between captive and free-roaming deer. Given that baiting and feeding are known risk factors in the transmission of chronic wasting disease, this bill would limit the

department's ability to effectively respond to new positive cases in captive deer.

In 2023, chronic wasting disease was found for the first time in wild deer in Jackson, Trempealeau, Winnebago, and Polk counties. Additionally, five captive deer facilities in Dodge, Sauk, Washburn, Rock, and Oneida Counties had deer that tested positive for chronic wasting disease. We need to provide more resources to prevent the spread of this disease into new areas of the state rather than limiting an effective management tool and unnecessarily puts Wisconsin wildlife and captive deer at risk.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 57: Dismissing or amending certain criminal charges and deferred prosecution agreements for certain crimes

On March 22, 2023, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 57 by a vote of 62 to 35, A.J. 3/22/23, p. 77.

On September 14, 2023, the senate adopted Senate Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 57 on a voice vote, S.J. 9/14/23, p. 444, and concurred in Assembly Bill 57, as amended, by a vote of 22 to 11, S.J. 9/14/23, p. 444.

On September 14, 2023, the assembly concurred in Senate Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 57 on a voice vote, A.J. 9/14/23, p. 291.

On December 6, 2023, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 57, A.J. 12/6/23, p. 498.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

December 6, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 57** in its entirety.

This bill would require that prosecutors get judicial approval prior to dismissing or amending charges for certain covered crimes, which would be defined by the bill. Under the bill, the court may only approve the prosecutor's application to dismiss or amend a charge involving

a covered crime if it finds certain criteria are met. Annually, if a court approves such an application, it must submit a report to the Legislature detailing each application and how the approval is consistent with the criteria. This bill would also prohibit a prosecutor from placing a person in a deferred prosecution program if there is a complaint or information filed that alleges that they commit-

ted a covered crime or if the person is charged with a covered crime.

I have heard from victim witness professionals, district attorneys, and the defense bar about the negative ramifications of this bill and I am vetoing it for several reasons. First, I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to restricting the discretion of prosecutors and judges to address pending charges and, further, subjecting prosecutorial discretion to judicial review. As the U.S. Supreme Court has observed, the concept of prosecutorial discretion rests on the recognition that the strength of the case, deterrence, enforcement priorities, and the allocation of finite resources, among others, are factors rendering prosecutorial decisions ill-suited for judicial review.

I am also vetoing this bill because I object to restricting the availability of evidence-based deferred prosecution agreements that have been shown to have better outcomes and be more cost-effective than traditional incarceration. Further, I am equally concerned about the implications this legislation would have on crime victims and survivors across our state. By way of example, as was

pointed out to me by several District Attorneys in requesting I veto this bill, prohibiting deferred prosecution agreements in certain sexual assault cases “would result in prosecutor becoming much more selective on charging sexual assault cases, and thus more victims of serious crimes receiving no level of justice.” Similarly, the Wisconsin Victim Witness Professionals also identified restricting the availability of deferred prosecution agreements as having a “negative impact” on “crime victims and communities we serve.”

For these reasons, I must veto this bill. I welcome the Legislature to seriously and meaningfully consider supporting evidence-based solutions that respect and protect victims and survivors, reduce recidivism and improve community safety, bolster our justice system workforce, and ensure our communities have the resources they need to invest in public safety services across our state.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 141: Restriction on the sale or use of a device based on its energy source

On April 18, 2023, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 141 by a vote of 62 to 35, A.J. 4/18/23, p. 113.

On June 7, 2023, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 141 by a vote of 22 to 11, S.J. 6/7/23, p. 274.

On August 4, 2023, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 141, A.J. 8/4/23, p. 252.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

August 4, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 141** in its entirety.

This bill would prohibit state agencies and local units of government from restricting the use or sale of a device based on the energy source that is used to power the device or that is consumed by the device.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature permanently preventing state agencies and local units of government from taking certain steps to limit certain types of devices based on energy source.

As innovative clean energy technologies and industries continue to improve, evolve, and become more competitive, cost efficient, and accessible, we should be working to make it easier, not harder, for our state to meet the needs of a 21st-century infrastructure, workforce, and

economy. This bill ignores that basic reality. Signing this bill would not only jeopardize our state’s and our communities’ ability to meet current and future consumer needs and demands but would also diminish our collective ability to help combat climate change by moving toward new, innovative industries and technology.

Further, I also object to the Legislature’s continued efforts to preempt local control and undermine trust in local governments across our state. The state should be a partner in—not an obstacle to—addressing the unique challenges facing our local communities.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 142: Restrictions on use or sale of motor vehicles based on power source

On April 18, 2023, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 142 by a vote of 63 to 35, A.J. 4/18/23, p. 113.

On June 7, 2023, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 142 by a vote of 22 to 11, S.J. 6/7/23, p. 274.

On August 4, 2023, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 142, A.J. 8/4/23, p. 252.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

August 4, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 142** in its entirety.

This bill would prohibit state agencies and local units of government from restricting the use or sale of motor vehicles based on the energy source used to power the motor vehicle, including use for propulsion or use for powering other functions of the motor vehicle.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature permanently preventing state agencies and local units of government from taking certain steps to limit certain types of devices based on energy source.

As innovative clean energy technologies and industries continue to improve, evolve, and become more competitive, cost efficient, and accessible, we should be working to make it easier, not harder, for our state to meet the needs of a 21st-century infrastructure, workforce, and

economy. This bill ignores that basic reality. Signing this bill would not only jeopardize our state's and our communities' ability to meet current and future consumer needs and demands but would also diminish our collective ability to help combat climate change by moving toward new, innovative industries and technology.

Further, I also object to the Legislature's continued efforts to preempt local control and undermine trust in local governments across our state. The state should be a partner in—not an obstacle to—addressing the unique challenges facing our local communities.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 146: Local guaranteed income programs

On April 25, 2023, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 146 by a vote of 60 to 34, A.J. 4/25/23, p. 125.

On October 17, 2023, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 146 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 10/17/23, p. 534.

On December 6, 2023, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 146, A.J. 12/6/23, p. 498.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

December 6, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 146** in its entirety.

This bill would prohibit political subdivisions from expending moneys of the political subdivision for guaranteed income programs, which the bill defines as programs that provide unearned regular periodic cash payments that may be used for any purpose.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature's continued efforts to arbitrarily restrict and preempt local government partners across our state. The Legislature should focus its efforts and energy on supporting our local partners and building upon our biparti-

san work this session to ensure our local communities have the resources they need to meet basic and unique needs alike. I trust our local partners to know best how to meet local needs, and the state should be a partner in—not an obstacle to—the work of our local partners to address their unique challenges and meet those needs, whatever they may be.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 147: Various changes to the unemployment insurance law and requiring approval by the Joint Committee on Finance of certain federally authorized unemployment benefits

On April 25, 2023, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 147 by a vote of 60 to 35, A.J. 4/25/23, p. 126.

On June 7, 2023, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 147 by a vote of 22 to 11, S.J. 6/7/23, p. 274.

On August 4, 2023, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 147, A.J. 8/4/23, p. 252.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

August 4, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 147** in its entirety.

This bill would make several modifications to the unemployment insurance laws and to worker's compensation relating to temporary disability. The bill would also provide that whenever unemployment benefits are augmented by congressional action or by executive action of the President of the United States, such augmentations must be approved by the Joint Committee on Finance.

'Reforms' to change or restrict economic assistance programs that are definitionally designed to support individuals and families experiencing economic hardship are not a silver-bullet solution to our state's workforce challenges. Indeed, if they were, then presumably the broad, sweeping changes passed by Republicans in this Legislature—many of whom are still serving—and enacted under my predecessor years ago now would have yielded substantial or material workforce benefits. And yet, our state's workforce challenges persist.

I continue to be perplexed by the Legislature's misplaced emphasis on changing and restricting economic assistance programs while offering no other comprehensive solutions or plans to meaningfully address our state's workforce challenges. Especially concerning is that, rather than supporting and passing the solutions and plans I have offered to comprehensively address our state's workforce challenges even in the absence of any plans of their own, the Legislature's apparent focus remains re-passing bills I have previously vetoed.

The people of Wisconsin expect their legislators to prioritize pressing issues facing our state and to work together to find real, impactful solutions to address those issues. The workforce challenges that have long plagued our state—challenges I believe will be imminently exacerbated by the looming fiscal cliff facing our state's child care industry—deserve the Legislature's immediate attention and urgent effort. The continued failure to address these challenges head-on will be catastrophic for our state's workforce, our communities, and our economy.

My commitment to the people of Wisconsin remains—I will always try to do the right thing, and I am committed to working with any legislator on either side of the aisle who shares my concerns and is ready to work together on substantive legislation to comprehensively address our state's workforce challenges.

Therefore, I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating additional barriers for individuals

applying for and receiving benefits from a program that is designed to support people and families experiencing economic hardship. I also object to the Legislature's unnecessary interference in future unemployment benefit augmentations. As I noted to the Legislature when vetoing this bill previously, the people of Wisconsin have regularly experienced the consequences of the Legislature's—and, more specifically, the Joint Finance Committee's—refusal and failure to act expeditiously despite urgent and significant need. As just one example, the Legislature's needless delays in 2020 during the coronavirus pandemic caused the state to lose out on approximately \$25 million in federal funding to support additional economic assistance for Wisconsinites. By way of further example, if this bill had previously been enacted during the coronavirus as the state was implementing the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program, the two-week period necessary to accommodate the Joint Finance Committee's passive review period alone would have resulted in an estimated more than \$360 million in lost funds. The people of Wisconsin simply cannot afford the Legislature's unnecessary, costly, and detrimental delays when they are facing economic uncertainty and our state is in the midst of an economic crisis.

Further, I object to this bill because the department already has substantial eligibility requirements and fraud prevention mechanisms in place to protect the unemployment system from potentially fraudulent activity. Since this bill would drastically alter the definition of misconduct in the statutes, there is risk that future unemployment insurance federal administration funds would be endangered, creating significant harm to the unemployment insurance system.

Finally, as I have indicated to this Legislature on previous occasions, modifications proposed to the state's unemployment insurance law should be considered as part of the long-established process of review and recommendation by the Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council, or in consultation with the council and the department. The process is intended to ensure that proposed modifications reflect the expertise and agreement of employers, workers and the department.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 149: Various changes to the unemployment insurance law

On April 25, 2023, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 149 by a vote of 60 to 35, A.J. 4/25/23, p. 127.

On June 7, 2023, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 149 by a vote of 22 to 11, S.J. 6/7/23, p. 275.

On August 4, 2023, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 149, A.J. 8/4/23, p. 253.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

August 4, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 149** in its entirety.

This bill would make various changes under unemployment insurance law related to an individual's availability for work and work search requirements.

'Reforms' to change or restrict economic assistance programs that are definitionally designed to support individuals and families experiencing economic hardship are not a silver-bullet solution to our state's workforce challenges. Indeed, if they were, then presumably the broad, sweeping changes passed by Republicans in this Legislature—many of whom are still serving—and enacted under my predecessor years ago now would have yielded substantial or material workforce benefits. And yet, our state's workforce challenges persist.

I continue to be perplexed by the Legislature's misplaced emphasis on changing and restricting economic assistance programs while offering no other comprehensive solutions or plans to meaningfully address our state's workforce challenges. Especially concerning is that, rather than supporting and passing the solutions and plans I have offered to comprehensively address our state's workforce challenges even in the absence of any plans of their own, the Legislature's apparent focus remains re-passing bills I have previously vetoed.

The people of Wisconsin expect their legislators to prioritize pressing issues facing our state and to work together to find real, impactful solutions to address those issues. The workforce challenges that have long plagued our state—challenges I believe will be imminently exacerbated by the looming fiscal cliff facing our state's child care industry—deserve the Legislature's immediate attention and urgent effort. The continued failure to address these challenges head-on will be catastrophic for our state's workforce, our communities, and our economy.

My commitment to the people of Wisconsin remains—I will always try to do the right thing, and I am committed

to working with any legislator on either side of the aisle who shares my concerns and is ready to work together on substantive legislation to comprehensively address our state's workforce challenges.

Therefore, I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating additional barriers for individuals applying for and receiving unemployment insurance benefits, which is designed to provide critical support during economic hardships. State law already has several protections in place to prevent the fraudulent activity this bill purports to address, which makes this bill unnecessary and duplicative. Current law states that claimants must be able and available for work, actively look for work, and provide documentation for completing work search actions on a weekly basis. Claimants also must report weekly whether they have refused job offers or job referrals. Failure to meet or comply with these existing requirements may result in an individual losing benefits, rectifying overpayments, or being assessed penalties. Further, the required investigation and enforcement of the new provisions under the bill would create additional workload for the department, and the legislation does not provide any additional resources associated with these additional responsibilities.

Finally, as I have indicated to this Legislature on previous occasions, modifications proposed to the state's unemployment insurance law should be considered as part of the long-established process of review and recommendation by the Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council, or in consultation with the council and the department. The process is intended to ensure that proposed modifications reflect the expertise and agreement of employers, workers and the department.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 150: Various changes to the unemployment insurance law and federal Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment grants

On April 25, 2023, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 150 by a vote of 60 to 35, A.J. 4/25/23, p. 127.

On June 7, 2023, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 150 by a vote of 22 to 11, S.J. 6/7/23, p. 275.

On August 4, 2023, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 150, A.J. 8/4/23, p. 254.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

August 4, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 150** in its entirety.

This bill would make several changes to the unemployment insurance program, including: (a) changing the name of the program to “reemployment assistance,” (b) creating additional work searches requirements for claimants after three weeks of benefit eligibility, (c) requiring the Department of Workforce Development to provide a list of at least four potential work opportunities each week for every claimant, (d) requiring a claimant to participate in employment workshops or training programs if the claimant is at risk of fully exhausting all unemployment benefits, (e) requiring the department to immediately promulgate administrative rules for drug testing claimants in certain occupations, and (f) requiring the department to continue participating in the federal Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment program.

‘Reforms’ to change or restrict economic assistance programs that are definitionally designed to support individuals and families experiencing economic hardship are not a silver-bullet solution to our state’s workforce challenges. Indeed, if they were, then presumably the broad, sweeping changes passed by Republicans in this Legislature—many of whom are still serving—and enacted under my predecessor years ago now would have yielded substantial or material workforce benefits. And yet, our state’s workforce challenges persist.

I continue to be perplexed by the Legislature’s misplaced emphasis on changing and restricting economic assistance programs while offering no other comprehensive solutions or plans to meaningfully address our state’s workforce challenges. Especially concerning is that, rather than supporting and passing the solutions and plans I have offered to comprehensively address our state’s workforce challenges even in the absence of any plans of their own, the Legislature’s apparent focus remains re-passing bills I have previously vetoed.

The people of Wisconsin expect their legislators to prioritize pressing issues facing our state and to work together to find real, impactful solutions to address those issues.

The workforce challenges that have long plagued our state—challenges I believe will be imminently exacerbated by the looming fiscal cliff facing our state’s child care industry—deserve the Legislature’s immediate attention and urgent effort. The continued failure to address these challenges head-on will be catastrophic for our state’s workforce, our communities, and our economy.

My commitment to the people of Wisconsin remains—I will always try to do the right thing, and I am committed to working with any legislator on either side of the aisle who shares my concerns and is ready to work together on substantive legislation to comprehensively address our state’s workforce challenges.

Therefore, I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because the department already performs many of the same functions this bill requires, such as assisting employers in finding available workers, or providing claimants with job services, training and employment assistance. In addition, the department already participates in and administers the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment program, assisting claimants with conducting work searches, employment counseling and career exploration, and referrals to job training programs. Further, I object to creating additional barriers for individuals and families applying to receive economic assistance when they are facing significant economic hardship.

Finally, as I have indicated to this Legislature on previous occasions, modifications proposed to the state’s unemployment insurance law should be considered as part of the long-established process of review and recommendation by the Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council, or in consultation with the council and the department. The process is intended to ensure that proposed modifications reflect the expertise and agreement of employers, workers and the department.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 151: Workforce metrics

On April 25, 2023, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 151 by a vote of 60 to 35, A.J. 4/25/23, p. 128.

On June 7, 2023, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 151 by a vote of 22 to 11, S.J. 6/7/23, p. 275.

On August 4, 2023, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 151, A.J. 8/4/23, p. 254.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

August 4, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 151** in its entirety.

This bill would require state agencies and authorities that coordinate, oversee or operate workforce development programs to track and report the performance of each such program using performance indicators similar to those used in federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) reporting. This bill specifies that the following programs would fall under the definition of a workforce development program: (a) Transform Milwaukee Jobs and Transitional Jobs programs, (b) initiatives offered by the Department of Corrections that reintegrate offenders, (c) employment and training programs administered by the Department of Children and Families, and (d) the Wisconsin Works program administered by the Department of Children and Families.

'Reforms' to change or restrict economic assistance programs that are definitionally designed to support individuals and families experiencing economic hardship are not a silver-bullet solution to our state's workforce challenges. Indeed, if they were, then presumably the broad, sweeping changes passed by Republicans in this Legislature—many of whom are still serving—and enacted under my predecessor years ago now would have yielded substantial or material workforce benefits. And yet, our state's workforce challenges persist.

I continue to be perplexed by the Legislature's misplaced emphasis on changing and restricting economic assistance programs while offering no other comprehensive solutions or plans to meaningfully address our state's workforce challenges. Especially concerning is that, rather than supporting and passing the solutions and plans I have offered to comprehensively address our state's workforce challenges even in the absence of any

plans of their own, the Legislature's apparent focus remains re-passing bills I have previously vetoed.

The people of Wisconsin expect their legislators to prioritize pressing issues facing our state and to work together to find real, impactful solutions to address those issues. The workforce challenges that have long plagued our state—challenges I believe will be imminently exacerbated by the looming fiscal cliff facing our state's child care industry—deserve the Legislature's immediate attention and urgent effort. The continued failure to address these challenges head-on will be catastrophic for our state's workforce, our communities, and our economy.

My commitment to the people of Wisconsin remains—I will always try to do the right thing, and I am committed to working with any legislator on either side of the aisle who shares my concerns and is ready to work together on substantive legislation to comprehensively address our state's workforce challenges.

Therefore, I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the duplicative, unnecessary and burdensome provisions created in this bill. The Department of Workforce Development, in coordination with its various workforce partners, already works to enhance program alignment across agencies and streamline workforce-related reporting required under federal law. Further, many of the state's workforce development programs do not fit within the current reporting structure under WIOA and have separate requirements under current state law.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 152: Various changes to the unemployment insurance law and authorizing the secretary of administration to transfer employees from any executive branch agency to the Department of Workforce Development for certain purposes

On April 25, 2023, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 152 by a vote of 59 to 35, A.J. 4/25/23, p. 128.

On June 7, 2023, the senate adopted Senate Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 152 on a voice vote, S.J. 6/7/23, p. 275, and concurred in Assembly Bill 152, as amended, by a vote of 22 to 11, S.J. 6/7/23, p. 275.

On June 7, 2023, the assembly concurred in Senate Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 152 on a voice vote, A.J. 6/7/23, p. 183.

On August 4, 2023, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 152, A.J. 8/4/23, p. 255.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

August 4, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 152** in its entirety.

This bill would make several modifications to the unemployment insurance laws, including changes related to identify verification processes, training for employers and claimants, and call center operations.

‘Reforms’ to change or restrict economic assistance programs that are definitionally designed to support individuals and families experiencing economic hardship are not a silver-bullet solution to our state’s workforce challenges. Indeed, if they were, then presumably the broad, sweeping changes passed by Republicans in this Legislature—many of whom are still serving—and enacted under my predecessor years ago now would have yielded substantial or material workforce benefits. And yet, our state’s workforce challenges persist.

I continue to be perplexed by the Legislature’s misplaced emphasis on changing and restricting economic assistance programs while offering no other comprehensive solutions or plans to meaningfully address our state’s workforce challenges. Especially concerning is that, rather than supporting and passing the solutions and plans I have offered to comprehensively address our state’s workforce challenges even in the absence of any plans of their own, the Legislature’s apparent focus remains re-passing bills I have previously vetoed.

The people of Wisconsin expect their legislators to prioritize pressing issues facing our state and to work together to find real, impactful solutions to address those issues. The workforce challenges that have long plagued our state—challenges I believe will be imminently exacerbated by the looming fiscal cliff facing our state’s child care industry—deserve the Legislature’s immediate attention and urgent effort. The continued failure to address these challenges head-on will be catastrophic for our state’s workforce, our communities, and our economy.

My commitment to the people of Wisconsin remains—I will always try to do the right thing, and I am committed

to working with any legislator on either side of the aisle who shares my concerns and is ready to work together on substantive legislation to comprehensively address our state’s workforce challenges.

Therefore, I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating additional barriers for individuals applying for and receiving unemployment insurance benefits, which is designed to provide critical support during times of economic hardship. The department currently engages in robust fraud prevention and detection efforts (including identity proofing), and codifying identity proofing measures for unemployment insurance is both restrictive and redundant to the agency and burdensome on claimants. In addition, the department already provides training and information not only for employers, but individuals seeking assistance claiming unemployment benefits, making the training and informational material sections of the bill duplicative as well. Further, the provisions under the bill would create additional workload for the department, and the legislation does not provide any additional resources associated with these additional responsibilities.

Moreover, the department is currently building a modernized unemployment insurance system, which includes a modern web-based call delivery system that allows agents increased flexibility in answering calls.

Finally, modifications proposed to the state’s unemployment insurance law should be considered as part of the long-established process of review and recommendation by the Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council, or in consultation with the council and the department. The process is intended to ensure that proposed modifications reflect the expertise and agreement of employers, workers and the department.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 200: Biennial report on various metrics related to the issuance of occupational credentials

On June 7, 2023, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 200 by a vote of 63 to 33, paired 2, A.J. 6/7/23, p. 179.

On June 14, 2023, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 200 by a vote of 22 to 11, S.J. 6/14/23, p. 298.

On August 4, 2023, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 200, A.J. 8/4/23, p. 255.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

August 4, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 200** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Department of Safety and Professional Services to report on various statistics related to the issuance of occupational credentials in its biennial report to the Legislature. Statistics included in the biennial report under the bill would include: (a) the number of applications the department or any credentialing board receives for initial, renewal, and reciprocal credentials, and the total number of those issued; (b) the lowest, highest, and median number of days from the date a credential application is initiated to the date a determination is made; (c) the median number of contacts made to and received from an applicant for an initial, renewal, or reciprocal credential before a final determination is issued; (d) the number of applications for initial, renewal, and reciprocal credentials for which the department or a credentialing board requested more information; and (e) the number of applications for initial, renewal, and reciprocal credentials that required the department or a credentialing board to review an arrest, conviction, or other offense record. The bill requires the department to report this information in total and separately for each profession.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety for several reasons. I object to the Legislature requiring the department to provide arbitrary metrics that not only would not offer

meaningful information to applicants but would divert critical resources away from the department's critical goal of processing applications efficiently and effectively. More specifically, I object to the Legislature mandating additional reporting requirements without providing the necessary resources for implementation, most especially given that the Legislature is acutely aware of urgent resource needs at the department but nevertheless refused to fulfill my request for additional staffing and resources to meet the department's current workload. The failure to do so has once again ensured that existing, pressing needs at the department will go unmet. The preparation and continual updating of the metrics on the department's website would divert valuable staff time away from the actual evaluation and processing of applications. The bill would not only not speed up the licensure process but would actually cause processing delays by placing unnecessary burdens on the department. Without providing the necessary, additional resources to implement the requirements of the bill, I cannot support it.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 201: Publication of credential metrics

On June 7, 2023, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 201 by a vote of 63 to 33, paired 2, A.J. 6/7/23, p. 180.

On June 14, 2023, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 201 by a vote of 22 to 11, S.J. 6/14/23, p. 298.

On August 4, 2023, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 201, A.J. 8/4/23, p. 256.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

August 4, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 201** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Department of Safety and Professional Services to post and update specific information on its website for each license, permit, or certificate that it issues every month. The department would have to post and update the following credential metrics, for each credential and collectively: (a) the median number of days from the day that all required application fees for an initial, renewal, or reciprocal credential application are submitted to the date a final determination is made; (b) the number of initial, renewal, or reciprocal credential applications submitted over the prior month; (c) the num-

ber of final determinations made on initial, renewal, and reciprocal credential applications over the prior month; and (d) the number of initial, renewal, and credential applications for which more than 45 days have passed since the applicant submitted all required fees or, if a fee is waived, since the application was submitted. In addition, the department would be required to report the number of applications undergoing legal review and where necessary information to complete the review from the applicant or a third party is pending.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety for several reasons. I object to the Legislature requiring the department to

provide arbitrary metrics that not only would not offer meaningful information to applicants but would divert critical resources away from the department’s critical goal of processing applications efficiently and effectively. More specifically, I object to the Legislature mandating additional reporting requirements without providing the necessary resources for implementation, most especially given that the Legislature is acutely aware of urgent resource needs at the department but nevertheless refused to fulfill my request for additional staffing and resources to meet the department’s current workload. The failure to do so has once again ensured that existing, pressing needs at the department will go

unmet. The preparation and continual updating of the metrics on the department’s website would divert valuable staff time away from the actual evaluation and processing of applications. The bill would not only not speed up the licensure process but would actually cause processing delays by placing unnecessary burdens on the department. Without providing the necessary, additional resources to implement the requirements of the bill, I cannot support it.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 377: Designating athletic sports and teams operated or sponsored by public schools or private schools participating in a parental choice program based on the sex of the participants

On October 12, 2023, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 377 by a vote of 63 to 35, A.J. 10/12/23, p. 343.

On March 12, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 377 by a vote of 21 to 11, S.J. 3/12/24, p. 913.

On April 2, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 377, A.J. 4/2/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 2, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 377** in its entirety.

This bill requires school boards, independent charter schools, and private schools participating in a parental choice program (“educational institutions”) that offer athletic teams to designate each team as male, female, or male and female (coed), based on the sex of allowed participants, defined as the sex as determined at birth and reflected on the participants’ birth certificate.

This bill ignores a transgender student–athlete policy created by the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association in 2015. The policy vests power at the member school level to determine which sports a student may participate in after consideration of written statements from the student, peers, teachers, and medical professionals, and in consideration of therapies relating to gender confirmation.

Further, this bill may conflict with existing federal law. In 2020, the U.S. Supreme Court case *Bostock v. Clayton County* concluded that discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity inherently involves treating individuals differently due to their sex in the context of employment under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Due to similarities between Title VII and Title IX, on June 16, 2021, the U.S. Department of Education released a notice of interpretation declaring that the Title IX prohibition on discrimination on the basis of sex is inclusive of sexual orientation and gender

identity, which is inclusive of transgender students. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Education has proposed a rule to clarify the role of gender identity in sports participation for schools receiving federal funding (including K–12 schools), developed in consideration of thousands of comments from parents, schools, coaches, and students. The proposed rule would prohibit schools from categorically banning transgender students from participating in athletics consistent with those students’ gender identity. Although not yet final, the proposed rule reflects the intent and spirit of Title IX protections for student athletes. Therefore, ultimately, this bill may be a violation of Title IX’s guarantee of rights to athletic participation for all students, not a protection of the rights of a subset of students.

Finally, and importantly, I believe this bill fails to comport with our Wisconsin values. We expect our kids to treat each other with kindness, respect, empathy, and compassion, and we should be able to expect adults to lead by example. I urge the Republican majority to do so while fully considering the harmful consequences its efforts and actions have on our kids prior to introducing similar legislation in the future.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to codifying discrimination into state statute and the Wisconsin State Legislature’s ongoing efforts to perpetuate hateful and discriminatory rhetoric and policies targeting LGBTQ Wisconsinites, including our transgender and

gender nonconforming kids. LGBTQ kids, including transgender and gender nonconforming kids, deserve our love and respect and support just like any other kid. I restate again today: this type of legislation, and the harmful rhetoric beget by pursuing it, harms LGBTQ Wisconsinites' and kids' mental health, emboldens anti-LGBTQ harassment, bullying, and violence, and threatens the safety and dignity of LGBTQ Wisconsinites, especially our LGBTQ kids. I will veto any bill that makes Wisconsin a less safe, less inclusive, and less welcoming place for LGBTQ people and kids, and I will continue to keep my promise of using every power available to me to

defend them, protect their rights, and keep them safe.

States across this country may give way to radical policies targeting LGBTQ individuals and families and threatening LGBTQ folks' everyday lives and their ability to be safe, valued, supported, and welcome being who they are. As long as I am the governor of this great state, Wisconsin will not be among them.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 386: Lowering the individual income tax rates in the third bracket and increasing and expanding the retirement income subtraction

On September 12, 2023, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 386 by a vote of 64 to 35, A.J. 9/12/23, p. 282.

On January 16, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 386 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 1/16/24, p. 725.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 386, A.J. 3/29/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 386** in its entirety.

This bill reduces the tax rate for the third individual income tax bracket from 5.3 percent to 4.4 percent beginning with tax year 2023. Additionally, the bill expands the current retirement income exclusion to subtract from taxable income, for individuals 67 or older, payments or distributions from qualified retirement plans and certain individual retirement accounts up to \$100,000 for single filers and \$150,000 for married-joint filers beginning in tax year 2023. The bill would reduce revenues in fiscal year 2023–24 by \$1.845 billion and by \$1.4 billion annually beginning in fiscal year 2024–25.

I have been proud to sign several income tax cuts during my time in office, including keeping—and, in fact, well exceeding—my promise to provide a ten percent, middle-class tax cut targeted to Wisconsin's working families. During my first term in office, I proudly signed one of the largest tax cuts in Wisconsin state history, which provided \$2 billion in individual income tax relief over the biennium and approximately \$1 billion annually going forward. Through this historic tax cut, combined with the tax cuts I signed during my first year in office alone, 86 percent of Wisconsin taxpayers have seen an income tax cut of 15 percent or more, with 2.4 million taxpayers receiving relief. Through the income tax cuts I have already signed into law during my time in office, Wisconsin taxpayers will see \$1.5 billion in tax relief annually, primarily targeted to the middle class. I was also recently proud to sign legislation to reduce annual

child care costs for working families. Under that proposal—similar versions of which I have introduced for years—more than 110,000 Wisconsin taxpayers will see an average benefit of \$656 per filer, providing nearly \$73 million in annual tax relief.

The bipartisan effort to help reduce the tax burden for families working to afford child care by expanding the child and dependent care tax credit from 50 percent to 100 percent of the federal credit is a great example of meaningful, important work to provide tax relief to the middle class. I believe, as I have often said, when we deliver tax relief for the people of Wisconsin—just as we have—it should be real relief aimed at helping Wisconsin's working families afford rising costs, and it should be responsible and sustainable, ensuring we can keep taxes low now and into the future without causing devastating cuts to priorities like public schools and public safety down the road. Unfortunately, this bill, similar to many before it, fails to balance these important obligations.

Making sound financial decisions and being prudent with Wisconsin taxpayer dollars remains a top priority and always will for me. I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to fiscally irresponsible measures that would leave the State of Wisconsin unable to meet its basic obligations to adequately fund education, health care, public safety and aid to local governments in the 2025–27 biennium and beyond. This bill would reduce revenues by such a margin that it would likely force the state, even with ordinary revenue growth, to partially or

fully drain the Budget Stabilization Fund just to provide bare minimum inflationary adjustments to key programs in the 2025–27 biennium.

Moreover, this bill could result in the state having to repay billions of dollars it received under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, completely reversing even

under the best projected economic circumstances the progress we have made toward improving our state’s fiscal condition.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 388: Creating a child care center renovations loan program

On September 14, 2023, the assembly adopted Assembly Substitute Amendment 1 (as amended by Assembly Amendment 1) to Assembly Bill 388 on a voice vote, A.J. 9/14/23, pp. 288–89, and passed Assembly Bill 388, as amended, by a vote of 62 to 35, A.J. 9/14/23, p. 289.

On February 13, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 388 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 808.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 388, A.J. 3/29/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 388** in its entirety.

This bill establishes a child care center renovations revolving loan fund and program at the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, to be funded with the \$15,000,000 GPR reserved in the Joint Committee on Finance’s supplemental appropriation during the 2023–25 biennial budget. Under the program, the corporation would award interest–free loans to licensed or certified child care providers or to those individuals who demonstrate that they will be licensed or certified within one year, for renovations of child care facilities. The child care provider must submit a business plan and 3–year financial forecast demonstrating that they will be able to repay the loan. If enrollment is not established or maintained after the loan is received, the corporation must terminate the loan agreement, and the child care provider must immediately repay the outstanding loan balance. The bill requires the corporation to award 60 percent of the funds to in–home child care providers, in awards not to exceed \$30,000, and 40 percent to child care providers that are not in–home child care providers, in awards not to exceed \$95,000.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Wisconsin State Legislature’s failure to address the looming child care industry fiscal cliff that, if unaddressed, will have serious consequences for our state’s workforce and economy, including thousands of projected child care programs closures, child care job losses, tens of thousands kids without child care, and

half a billion dollars in economic impacts between parents leaving the workforce and reduced employer productivity. The state must make the meaningful, sustainable investments necessary to stabilize the crucial child care industry and prevent its collapse.

I also further object to limiting the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation’s flexibility in disbursing these funds to child care providers given the Legislature’s refusal to make substantial investments to bolster our state’s child care industry and help keep child care providers open to support our state’s workforce.

Finally, I believe that the funding that was made available in the 2023–25 biennial budget should be distributed as grants to child care providers instead of loans. As a loan balance would have to be immediately repaid if a child care provider is unable to maintain enrollment, even based upon factors beyond their control, many providers, especially new providers, may be hesitant to accept these loans.

Making critical, long–term investments in our child care industry to maintain and expand access to child care in Wisconsin and reduce out–of–pocket child care costs for working families is about doing what is best for our kids, our families, and our economy. I remain hopeful the Legislature will join me in this important work.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 395: Requirements for and insurance related to peer-to-peer motor vehicle sharing programs

On February 22, 2024, the assembly adopted Assembly Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 395 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 755, and passed Assembly Bill 395, as amended, by a vote of 63 to 35, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 755.

On March 12, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 395 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 3/12/24, p. 913.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 395, A.J. 3/29/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 395** in its entirety.

This bill would establish requirements for peer-to-peer motor vehicle sharing programs, including license requirements, safety recall responsibilities, disclosure and notification requirements, record retention requirements, and motor vehicle insurance coverage requirements under which the sharing program, vehicle owner or vehicle driver must have vehicle liability insurance with at least the minimum statutory coverage amounts required. The bill would also require the sharing program to assume liability for a vehicle owner for bodily injury, property damage, uninsured motorist and personal injury losses, except in the case of certain acts by the vehicle's owner. Under the bill, insurance maintained by the sharing program must act as backup coverage in cases where the vehicle owner's or driver's coverage has lapsed or does not provide the required coverage. The bill would also clarify that sharing programs and shared vehicle owners are not in the vehicle rental business and are therefore exempt from local rental car taxes and state rental vehicle fees if applicable sales and use taxes were paid at the time of purchase.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the bill's inadequate insurance coverage requirements. Under the bill, sharing programs, vehicle owners, and vehicle drivers would only be required to have coverage for the minimum statutory insurance coverage amounts, which are outdated and too low to adequately cover the costs associated with medical bills and property damage, potentially leaving victims on the hook for the remaining costs. I am open to signing a version of this bill at a future date that provides more adequate insurance coverage requirements.

I also object to the local rental car tax and state rental vehicle fees exemption in this bill. Tourism initiatives, such as the continued financial support for the Wisconsin Center District, would likely be impacted by reduced local revenues if this bill were signed into law.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 396: Fees for obtaining the official voter registration list

On November 9, 2023, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 396 on a voice vote, A.J. 11/9/23, p. 447.

On November 14, 2023, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 396 by a vote of 22 to 11, S.J. 11/14/23, p. 616.

On December 6, 2023, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 396, A.J. 12/6/23, p. 498.

TEXT OF 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

Assembly Bill 398: Participants in clinical research trials

On February 20, 2024, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 398 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/20/24, p. 721.

On March 12, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 398 on a voice vote, S.J. 3/12/24, p. 913.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 398, A.J. 3/29/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 398** in its entirety.

This bill specifies that compensated participants in clinical research trials shall not be treated as employees for purposes of minimum wage, worker’s compensation, and unemployment insurance laws.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to potentially depriving clinical research trial participants from receiving the protections and benefits to which employees are generally entitled, as well as related legal remedies. Additionally, the changes in this bill create a specific carveout from provisions that could otherwise classify an independent contractor as an employee for purposes of worker’s compensation protections. There continues to be a well-established process that the Department of Workforce Development uses to navigate employee and contractor determinations on a case-by-case basis. The department uses a six-part test for minimum wage, and a nine-part test for unemployment insurance and worker’s compensation benefits. These tests provide a guideline and consistency for classification between the relationships of individuals and employers.

I object to providing a specific carveout for clinical research trials, which may signal to other employers that they may seek similar special treatment for other work or services that would otherwise qualify for worker’s compensation benefits under the law, which may further limit employee protections.

Moreover, I am concerned this bill may cause Wisconsin to fail to conform with federal requirements. Specifically, it could put Wisconsin in nonconformity with the Federal Unemployment Tax Act which may put employer tax credits and Unemployment Insurance administrative grant dollars at risk of terminating.

Finally, neither the Worker’s Compensation Advisory Council nor the Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council has taken a position on the changes in the bill, and these councils should be key stakeholders for recommending such policy changes for enactment.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 415: Legislative redistricting

On September 14, 2023, the assembly adopted Assembly Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 415 by a vote of 63 to 35, Assembly Amendment 2 to Assembly Bill 415 by a vote of 64 to 34, Assembly Amendment 3 to Assembly Bill 415 by a vote of 64 to 34, Assembly Amendment 4 to Assembly Bill 415 by a vote of 66 to 32, Assembly Amendment 5 to Assembly Bill 415 by a vote of 66 to 32, Assembly Amendment 6 to Assembly Bill 415 by a vote of 66 to 32, and Assembly Amendment 7 to Assembly Bill 415 by a vote of 66 to 32, A.J. 9/14/23, pp. 292–94, and passed Assembly Bill 415, as amended, by a vote of 64 to 32, A.J. 9/14/23, p. 294.

On January 23, 2024, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 415 by a vote of 18 to 13, S.J. 1/23/24, p. 741, and concurred in Assembly Bill 415, as amended, by a vote of 17 to 14, S.J. 1/23/24, p. 742.

On January 24, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 415 by a vote of 63 to 35, A.J. 1/24/24, p. 592.

On January 30, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 415, A.J. 1/30/24, p. 617.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

January 30, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 415** in its entirety.

Assembly Bill 415 would redistrict the state’s legislative districts.

I am vetoing Assembly Bill 415 in its entirety because I object to maps designed to undemocratically serve the politicians who draft them. The people of Wisconsin deserve fair maps, and this bill is a last-ditch effort aimed at preventing that outcome. The people of Wisconsin have lived under some of the most gerrymandered maps in the country for a decade. Wisconsinites have long deserved maps that are fair, responsive, and reflect the will of the people, and my promise to Wisconsinites has always been and remains that I will not accept anything less.

This bill prioritizes protecting incumbent, gerrymandered legislators by making their future campaigns more convenient for them, not better for the constituents they serve. Moving legislative district lines to ensure Republican-gerrymandered incumbents are better positioned to retain political power does not help root out gerrymandering from our democracy; it further entrenches it.

Wisconsinites want and deserve maps that support a robust, healthy, and deliberative democracy in which elected officials are responsive to their communities and constituents and must work to earn the support and the votes of the people they serve. Assembly Bill 415, in stark contrast, aims to serve the elected officials who voted for those maps. Protecting incumbents is neither what Wisconsin law prioritizes nor requires—and for good reason.

I further object to these maps failing to comply with basic constitutional requirements for legislative districts, a likely consequence of the Wisconsin State Legislature haphazardly amending, advancing, and passing Assembly Bill 415 in less than 24 hours’ time.

The results of that rushed process are clear: Assembly Districts 88 and 93, as created by this bill, include non-contiguous territory in violation of our State Constitution. This fact alone renders Assembly Bill 415’s maps noncompliant with core constitutional and legal requirements for legislative districts.

Often, in vetoing a bill, the main solace I can offer Wisconsinites is that a bad policy—in this case, unbalanced, unfair maps designed to protect incumbent legislators—is prevented from becoming law. Today, fair maps deserving of the people of this state are within reach. I submitted fair maps to the Wisconsin Supreme Court to consider in the ongoing redistricting litigation, *Clarke v. Wisconsin Elections Commission*. These fair maps are responsive to the will of the people, avoid partisan bias, increase the number of competitive legislative seats, and meet all legal requirements. I remain as optimistic as ever that Wisconsinites will soon have the fair maps they deserve at long last.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

**Assembly Bill 465: Prohibiting gender transition medical intervention
for individuals under 18 years of age**

On October 12, 2023, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 465 by a vote of 63 to 35, A.J. 10/12/23, p. 344.

On October 17, 2023, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 465 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 10/17/23, p. 535.

On December 6, 2023, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 465, A.J. 12/6/23, p. 498.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

December 6, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 465** in its entirety.

This bill would prohibit, with limited exceptions, healthcare providers from engaging in, causing the engagement in, or making referrals for certain medical intervention practices upon an individual under 18 years of age for the purpose of changing the minor's body to correspond to a sex that is discordant with the minor's biological sex. In addition, the bill would require the Board of Nursing, the Medical Examining Board, and the Physician Assistant Affiliated Credentialing Board to investigate any allegation that any person licensed or certified by the respective boards has violated any of the prohibitions described in the bill. Finally, the bill would require the Board of Nursing, the Medical Examining Board, and the Physician Assistant Affiliated Credentialing Board to revoke the license or certification of any provider that is found to have violated any of the prohibitions described in the bill.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to restricting physicians from providing evidence-based and medically appropriate care to their patients, restricting parents from making decisions with physicians to ensure their kids receive the healthcare they need, and preventing patients from receiving that basic, life-saving care.

Healthcare providers should be trusted to provide medically appropriate and accurate information, treatment,

and care for their patients without the unnecessary political interference of politicians. Gender-affirming care is recognized by most major medical associations as the evidence-based treatment for transgender and gender-nonconforming youth with gender dysphoria. The American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Psychological Association, and the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry have all stated that gender-affirming care saves lives.

Further, and especially important to me personally, I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature's ongoing efforts to manufacture and perpetuate false, hateful, and discriminatory anti-LGBTQ policies and rhetoric in our state. This type of legislation, and the rhetoric beget by pursuing it, harms LGBTQ people and kids' mental health, emboldens anti-LGBTQ hate and violence, and threatens the safety and dignity of LGBTQ Wisconsinites. I will veto any bill that makes Wisconsin a less safe, less inclusive, and less welcoming place for LGBTQ people and kids. I support LGBTQ Wisconsinites, and I will continue to do everything in my power to defend them, protect their rights, and keep them safe.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 476: Filling vacancies in elective state offices in the executive branch

On November 9, 2023, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 476 on a voice vote, A.J. 11/9/23, p. 448.

On February 20, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 476 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 848.

On March 21, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 476, A.J. 3/21/24, p. 811.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 21, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 476** in its entirety.

This bill eliminates the ability of the Governor to fill vacancies through appointment for the Office of Secretary of State, Office of State Treasurer, Attorney General, and State Superintendent of Public Instruction without confirmation by the Wisconsin State Senate. Instead, under the bill, a vacancy would be filled through a special election unless the vacancy occurs in any of these positions on or after January 1 of a year in which there is a regularly scheduled election for the office. In the latter scenario under the bill the vacancy must be filled by appointment from the Governor subject to the advice and consent of the Wisconsin State Senate for the remainder of the unexpired term.

This bill is a purely partisan reaction to my appointment to fill the vacancy in the Office of the Secretary of State in March 2023. I am vetoing this bill because I object to the Wisconsin State Legislature’s continued, widespread

efforts to infringe upon executive branch authority, for example, as here, by unnecessarily restricting the ability of the Governor to make appointments to fill vacancies in important roles. The provisions of this bill could result in long-term vacancies in these critical positions, disrupting continuity of government, and resulting in the absence of leadership and accountability within core state government agencies and constitutional offices.

I further object to giving additional advice and consent authority to a hyper-partisan Wisconsin State Senate that has consistently abused its advice and consent powers to exact political retribution, threaten and bully dedicated public servants, and cause irreparable damage to our state’s institutions.

Sincerely,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 480: Eligibility for farmland preservation tax credits

On January 25, 2024, the assembly adopted Assembly Amendment 2 to Assembly Bill 480 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/25/24, p. 602, and passed Assembly Bill 480, as amended, by a vote of 64 to 35, A.J. 1/25/24, p. 602.

On February 13, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 480 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 809.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 480, A.J. 3/29/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 480** in its entirety.

This bill would prohibit a person from claiming a farmland preservation tax credit for any part of the qualifying acreage on which a photovoltaic solar energy system is located, unless the system qualifies as an accessory use.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to limiting the ability of Wisconsin’s farmers to diversify potential revenue options to support their operations. I further object to the Wisconsin State Legislature unnecessarily discouraging investment in solar power across our state.

Wisconsin is working in earnest to build a workforce, economy, and infrastructure that is ready to meet the needs of the 21st Century. An important part of this effort is encouraging investment and development of renewable energy sources, including solar power. This bill is a step in the wrong direction.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 494: Status as an indefinitely confined voter for purposes of automatically receiving absentee ballots

On November 9, 2023, the assembly adopted Assembly Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 494 on a voice vote, A.J. 11/9/23, p. 448, and passed Assembly Bill 494, as amended, on a voice vote, A.J. 11/9/23, p. 449.

On November 14, 2023, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 494 by a vote of 22 to 11, S.J. 11/14/23, 617.

On December 6, 2023, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 494, A.J. 12/6/23, p. 498.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

December 6, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 494** in its entirety.

This bill would restrict the definition of an indefinitely confined voter, create new and separate procedures for indefinitely confined electors to vote, and remove certain people from having an indefinitely confined voter status.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the manner by which it targets certain voters and ongoing efforts by the Legislature to make it more difficult for eligible voters to vote.

Indefinitely confined voter status was developed to help voters with disabilities and who are aging and older or sick continue to exercise their constitutional right to vote. This bill substantially restricts that important status by narrowing the definition such that a voter can only be considered indefinitely confined if they cannot travel independently without “significant burden” due to frailty, physical illness, or a disability that is expected to last longer than one year. This bill provides no legal or medical justification for these changes, no definition for

how an individual would interpret what a “significant burden” is or whether they have one, and no explanation for the arbitrary determination that a 13-month-long disability should qualify for indefinitely confined status while an 11-month-long disability should not, among other provisions that prompt more questions than certainty. Further, coupled with the bill’s definitional restrictions are additional barriers for voters with indefinitely confined status who want to cast their ballot, requiring these individuals to fill out a new, separate form from the standard absentee voting form and arbitrary provisions to remove some voters’ indefinitely confined status based on nothing more than when they registered.

The right to vote is a fundamental core value of our democracy. We should be making it easier, not harder, for eligible Wisconsinites to cast their ballot.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 510: Rights reserved to a parent or guardian of a child

On January 18, 2024, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 510 by a vote of 62 to 35, A.J. 1/18/24, p. 576.

On February 13, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 510 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 809.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 510, A.J. 3/29/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 510** in its entirety.

This bill would establish a new legal standard for infringement relating to certain rights of parents and guardians and create a civil cause of action with regard to those such rights.

As a former science teacher, principal and state superintendent, I believe parents are the first and best teachers our kids have. There has been no change in my position in the two years since this bill was last sent to my desk and vetoed.

We know we can improve our kids' academic achievement when parents are actively involved in their kids' lives, including supporting their education. During my time as an educator and administrator, engaging with parents and family members about their kids' education was invaluable. As governor, I trust parents, educators, and school boards to work together to do what's best for our kids.

This bill is neither aimed at supporting our parents, our kids, and our schools, nor improving student outcomes, nor fostering collaboration and communication to do what is best for our kids; this bill is yet another attempt to divide our schools and communities and inject political ideology in the very last place it belongs—in our classrooms and our schools. I urge politicians on both

sides of the aisle to stop using our kids as political pawns. I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to sowing division in our schools, which only hurts our kids and learning in our classrooms. Now more than ever, the Wisconsin State Legislature's focus should be on doing what's best for our kids, improving school quality, and supporting our classrooms by making meaningful, sustainable investments in K–12 education. By providing long-term state support for our schools and bolstering staff resources, we can better empower and facilitate parent engagement, which is critically important for our kids' success.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 512: Hunting wild animals with the aid of a dog, dog training on wild animals, and dog trialing on wild animals in the northern portion of the state

On January 25, 2024, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 512 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/25/24, p. 603.

On February 13, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 512 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 809.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 512, A.J. 3/29/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 512** in its entirety.

This bill repeals Department of Natural Resources administrative code provisions that prohibit a person from hunting or pursuing a free-roaming wild animal with the aid of a dog from May 1 to June 30 in a designated portion of the state north of certain east-west highways. Additionally, this bill repeals Department of Natural Resources administrative code provisions restricting dog trialing and dog training on free-roaming wild animals from May 1 to June 30 in the designated northern zone.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to increasing the risk of harassment against ground-nesting birds, deer fawns, elk calves, bear cubs and other wildlife in ecologically sensitive areas. Ample opportunities exist for individuals to hunt and train using dogs within this region outside of the May 1 to June 30 timeframe. The administrative code provisions protect wildlife during the important spring breeding and migration season.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 541: Provision of telehealth services by out-of-state health care providers

On November 14, 2023, the assembly adopted Assembly Amendments 1 and 2 to Assembly Bill 541 on voice votes, A.J. 11/14/23, p. 468, and passed Assembly Bill 541, as amended, on a voice vote, A.J. 11/14/23, p. 468.

On January 16, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 541 by a vote of 25 to 7, S.J. 1/16/24, p. 726.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 541, A.J. 3/29/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 541** in its entirety.

This bill would allow out-of-state mental health care providers without a Wisconsin-issued license or credential to provide telehealth mental health care services to patients in Wisconsin, if the provider holds a license or approval from the state that the provider is physically present in when providing telehealth services and is not under investigation for unprofessional conduct.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to efforts that may result in Wisconsinites receiving lower quality of health-care and provides fewer protections for Wisconsinites who may then receive poor treatment or experience unethical behavior from a healthcare provider. I appreciate the need for Wisconsin to retain, train, and recruit more qualified mental health providers across our state; however, achieving that goal through potentially sacrificing the quality of healthcare that Wisconsinites may receive—most especially for mental health services, which individuals may be seeking because they are experiencing a life-threatening mental health crisis—is untenable.

With limited exception, this bill prohibits requiring mental health care providers to be licensed, registered, certified, or approved to practice in Wisconsin in order to provide

telehealth mental health services to patients located in Wisconsin if that provider meets certain conditions. Wisconsin is already part of interstate compact agreements that allow out-of-state providers to practice in our state for credentials such as psychologists and other mental health professionals. This bill creates an end run around the compact system, enabling providers who do not meet these existing standards or have the same experience as Wisconsin or compact state providers to provide mental health services through telehealth to people in our state.

Further, this bill leaves patients and consumers little recourse for complaints regarding poor treatment or unethical behavior. Credentialing examining boards in Wisconsin and the Department of Safety and Professional Services have no jurisdiction in other states, complaints filed on an out-of-state practitioner would not be able to be acted upon in Wisconsin, leaving patients and consumers fighting those matters across state lines.

I cannot support legislation that is likely to ultimately reduce healthcare quality and patient protections for Wisconsinites across our state.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 543: Election observers

On November 9, 2023, the assembly adopted Assembly Amendments 1 and 2 to Assembly Bill 543 on voice votes, A.J. 11/9/23, p. 449, and passed Assembly Bill 543, as amended, on a voice vote, A.J. 11/9/23, p. 449.

On January 16, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 543 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 1/16/24, p. 726.

On March 21, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 543, A.J. 3/21/24, p. 811.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 21, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 543** in its entirety.

This bill would modify certain election procedures by substantially reducing the distance between election observers and the election workers and processes they are observing. The bill also explicitly states that election observers shall have access to all stages of the election process and creates penalties to enforce these provisions against election officials. Additionally, the bill would apply election access provisions to recount procedures.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to reducing the distance between election observers and the tables where election activities are occurring. Wisconsin’s existing laws already provide robust election security measures to ensure persons who wish to observe our elections have the opportunity to do so. Under current law, Wisconsin’s election procedures specify that individuals may observe election activities at a minimum distance of three feet and a maximum of eight feet at polling places, in-person absentee voting

sites, and absentee ballot processing locations. This allows observers sufficient proximity to ensure election procedures are being followed correctly while also making sure local officials can provide appropriate viewing areas, given the space available, without impeding the work of local clerks, election administrators, and poll workers. This bill mandates that election observers may be no more than three feet away, increasing the potential for observers to interfere with or intimidate eligible voters casting their ballot as

well as election officials performing their critical responsibilities.

I cannot support legislation that could enable voter intimidation and prevent election workers from effectively and efficiently carrying out their important duties without interference.

Sincerely,
TONY EVERS
Governor

Assembly Bill 545: Technical college district board membership

On November 7, 2023, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 545 on a voice vote, A.J. 11/7/23, p. 424.

On January 16, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 545 by a vote of 21 to 11, S.J. 1/16/24, p. 726.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 545, A.J. 3/29/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 545** in its entirety.

This bill would require that, in order to be a member of a technical college district board, an individual must be a United States citizen.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to the Wisconsin State Legislature's attempt to limit the local authority for technical college district boards to choose whom to elect.

Technical college district boards are capable of identifying the best, brightest, and most qualified individuals to serve without the Legislature's unsolicited assistance.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS
Governor

Assembly Bill 570: Certain kinds of elector fraud, defects on absentee ballot certificates, returning absentee ballots, appointment of election officials, and personal care voting assistants

On November 9, 2023, the assembly adopted Assembly Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 570 on a voice vote, A.J. 11/9/23, p. 450, and passed Assembly Bill 570, as amended, on a voice vote, A.J. 11/9/23, p. 450.

On January 16, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 570 by a vote of 21 to 11, S.J. 1/16/24, p. 727.

On March 21, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 570, A.J. 3/21/24, p. 811.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 21, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 570** in its entirety.

The bill would create a procedure for conducting an election at qualified retirement home and residential care facilities during a public health emergency or an incident of infectious disease that restricts access to such facilities, by appointing employees of such facilities as "personal care

voting assistants" to assist with absentee voting. The bill would also add requirements for absentee ballots, including mandating electronic notification of ballot defects and prohibiting correction of certification errors by individuals other than the voter, or a witness with respect to a witness certificate. Furthermore, this bill would change requirements and procedures relating to special voting deputies

dispatched to qualified retirement home and residential care facilities, would modify canvassing procedures under certain conditions, would prohibit individuals employed by certain political groups from serving as election officials, and would add new penalties, including categorizing certain actions as election fraud.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety for several reasons. First, I object to delegating important election authority and responsibilities to retirement home and residential care facility employees who have minimal training in election procedures, and doing so without those employees having the benefit of supervision by an election official.

Second, I object to creating any additional barriers that may prevent eligible Wisconsin voters from casting their ballot and having their vote counted, including prohibiting

clerks from fixing small, technical errors like making sure an address includes the ZIP code. The purpose of the additional information required on the ballot certificate is to be able to ensure the identity of the voter and witness and to be able to locate the individuals if there is a legitimate concern or question; not to be able to invalidate a person's vote based on a minor mistake. This bill would effectively require all ballots with even the most inconsequential mistakes to be discarded unless the clerk is able to return these ballots for timely correction, increasing the likelihood that an eligible Wisconsin voter may be disenfranchised and prevented from participating in our democracy.

Sincerely,
TONY EVERS
Governor

Assembly Bill 572: Absentee voting in certain residential care facilities and retirement homes and court determinations of incompetency and ineligibility to vote

On November 9, 2023, the assembly adopted Assembly Substitute Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 572 on a voice vote, A.J. 11/9/23, p. 450, and passed Assembly Bill 572, as amended, on a voice vote, A.J. 11/9/23, p. 450.

On February 13, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 572 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 809.

On March 21, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 572, A.J. 3/21/24, p. 811.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 21, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 572** in its entirety.

This bill would require the administrator of a residential care facility or qualified retirement home, or the administrator's designee, to email each designated contact of each facility occupant who intends to vote by absentee ballot with special voting deputies to inform them of the dates and times when the voting deputies will be visiting the facility or home, and to allow them to be present in the room where the voting is conducted. The bill would also require a circuit court to notify the Elections Commission, the voter, and the voter's guardian if the court determines an individual is incapable of understanding the objective of the elective process and is therefore ineligible to vote. Within three business days of receiving a notification of such ineligibility, the Elections Commission would be required to change the status of the voter to inactive on the official voter list, make a note on the list that the voter is not eligible to vote, and notify the voter and the voter's municipal clerk of this change in status. If a court restores a voter's right to vote, the court must notify the Elections Commission, and the commission must, within three business days, notify the voter that the voter is eligible, including with such notice a registration form, which the voter must complete prior to voting. The

bill would further require a clerk to examine the registration list before issuing a ballot to a voter. Finally, the bill would revise the voter registration form with respect to information relating to incompetency or disqualification and would modify current law so that a person who has been determined ineligible to vote due to incompetency would not be guilty of a Class I felony if they vote during an election, though the person's vote would still be excluded.

I appreciate portions of this bill designed to better ensure individuals found ineligible to vote due to incompetency are made inactive on the voter list and protected from unnecessary felony charges if they mistakenly attempt to vote. However, I am vetoing this bill because I object to an administrator being legally required to contact every designated contact for every facility resident who intends to vote through special voting deputies.

Every eligible Wisconsin resident should be able to cast their ballot without fear of interference or intimidation, including aging and older adults. Current law already permits facilities to notify a resident's designated contact who is a relative when absentee voting will be conducted if requested by the relative. However, the fact that an individual is a resident's designated contact for

healthcare purposes does not necessarily mean the resident wants, needs, or is comfortable with that individual supervising the resident's voting. I cannot support legislation that could enable voter intimidation and interference while depriving eligible aging and older Wisconsinites casting their ballot of the dignity, privacy, and

independence afforded to every other eligible Wisconsin voter.

Sincerely,
TONY EVERS
Governor

Assembly Bill 603: Erecting highway signs for The Prairie School and Wind Point Lighthouse in Racine County

On February 20, 2024, the assembly adopted Assembly Substitute Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 603 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/20/24, p. 725, and passed Assembly Bill 603, as amended, on a voice vote, A.J. 2/20/24, p. 725.

On March 12, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 603 on a voice vote, S.J. 3/12/24, p. 914.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 603, A.J. 3/29/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 603** in its entirety.

This bill requires the Department of Transportation to place two directional assistance signs for the Prairie School and Wind Point Lighthouse at a specific I-94 interchange in Racine County.

I am vetoing the bill in its entirety because I object to putting the Department of Transportation out of compliance with its own policies, derived from federal rules

regarding signage on the interstate highway system that prioritize limited signage space for signs directly related to the primary purpose of a highway interchange and prevent duplicative signage.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS
Governor

Assembly Bill 610: Waivers from immunization requirements at institutions of higher education

On February 22, 2024, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 610 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 757.

On March 12, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 610 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 3/12/24, p. 914.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 610, A.J. 3/29/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 610** in its entirety.

This bill would require any institution of higher education that receives public funding and that requires any student or prospective student to receive an immunization as a condition of attendance to waive the immunization requirement for a student or prospective student if the student or prospective student objects to the immunization for reasons of health, religion or personal conviction. In addition, the bill would stipulate that no institution of higher education may require that a student or prospective student provide any explanation or justification of the student's or prospective student's objection to an immunization. Finally, the bill would require an

institution of higher education that receives public funding to inform a student or prospective student of the student's or prospective student's right to a waiver from the institution of higher education's immunization requirements in writing at any time the institution of higher education informs the student or prospective student of the immunization requirements.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Wisconsin State Legislature's efforts to micromanage decisions to respond to public health incidents and restrict existing tools available higher education institutions to keep students, faculty, staff safe and healthy on their campuses. Efforts to respond to public health incidents or

emergencies should be based on science and the expertise of public health experts aimed at mitigating and preventing further spread and infection. Higher education institutions have a higher risk for outbreaks of certain communicable diseases due to students living in close quarters, among other unique factors. Vaccines are safe, effective and key to preventing serious illness, hospitalizations, and death from certain communicable diseases. I trust that Wisconsin's higher education institutions are well

equipped to implement mitigation measures, as necessary, in consultation with public health experts to keep their campuses healthy and safe without the political interference of the Legislature.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 669: A liability exemption for motor vehicle sellers after sale

On January 18, 2024, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 669 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/18/24, p. 577.

On March 12, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 669 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 3/12/24, p. 915.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 669, A.J. 3/29/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 669** in its entirety.

This bill would, if certain criteria apply, create immunity from civil and criminal liability for motor vehicle sellers and would provide that a seller is not responsible for local ordinance violations committed involving the motor vehicle.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating unnecessarily broad immunity from civil and criminal liability. I appreciate the bill attempts to clarify the law involving a seller's liability after a vehicle is sold; however, under current statutory and common law, sellers are already generally not liable in the situations described by the bill's authors. Where only minor alterations to current law may be needed, the bill is over prescriptive in addressing the issues it seeks to resolve. I am

concerned, for instance, this bill would preempt any basis for a seller's liability, including liability arising out of the sale of the vehicle, except in very limited circumstances.

As I said in my veto message for 2021 Senate Bill 570, 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. Unfortunately, the immunities created by this bill are too broad and could be better tailored to address a seller's liability after the vehicle is sold.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 957: Preemption of certain local animal ordinances

On February 22, 2024, the assembly adopted Assembly Amendments 1 and 2 to Assembly Bill 957 on voice votes, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 765, and passed Assembly Bill 957, as amended, on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 765.

On March 12, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 957 on a voice vote, S.J. 3/12/24, p. 916.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 957, A.J. 3/29/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 957** in its entirety.

This bill prohibits a political subdivision from enacting certain regulations for an animal facility in an area that is zoned exclusively or primarily for agricultural use,

unless the activity affected presents a substantial threat to public health or safety or the regulations are otherwise specifically authorized. Specifically, political subdivisions may not establish: (1) animal welfare standards that

are more stringent than those in state law or regulations; (2) medication and vaccination requirements that are not required or prohibited under state law or regulations; (3) limits on the use of animals while in or after leaving an animal facility, except as provided in state law or regulations; or (4) limits on the species of animal that may be raised or kept in an area that is zoned exclusively or primarily for agricultural use. The bill further provides that existing local ordinances, resolutions, or orders that conflict with the bill may not be enforced unless the regulated activity presents a substantial threat to public health or safety.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety for several reasons. First, I object to removing control over animal welfare standards from local authorities and preempting their ability to pass ordinances with the interests of their community in mind. This bill removes the ability for local residents in municipalities throughout the state to engage in

self-government by passing local ordinances related to animal welfare in animal facilities.

I am also vetoing this bill because I object to potentially revoking, simply through conflict with the provisions of this bill, existing ordinances related to animal welfare that voters in municipalities throughout the state have enacted through ballot measures.

Finally, I am vetoing this bill because of the potential impact on enforcement of animal welfare regulations at the local level. The broad language included in this bill may result in local municipalities not pursuing other enforceable ordinances that protect animal welfare due to lack of clarity with respect to the scope of the restrictions in this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 1020: Expansion of the second individual income tax bracket

On February 13, 2024, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 1020 by a vote of 62 to 34, A.J. 2/13/24, p. 670.

On February 20, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 1020 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 850.

On March 1, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 1020, A.J. 3/1/24, p. 786.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 1, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 1020** in its entirety.

This bill expands the taxable income thresholds for the second individual income tax bracket, beginning with tax year 2024: (1) from \$14,320–\$28,640, for a single filer under current law, to \$14,320–\$112,500; (2) from \$19,090–\$38,190, for a married–joint filer under current law, to \$19,090–\$150,000; and (3) from \$9,550–\$19,090, for a married person filing separately under current law, to \$9,550–\$75,000. These changes would increase the amount of taxable income subject to the 4.4 percent second bracket rate instead of the 5.3 percent third bracket rate. The bill would also require the Department of Revenue to update individual income tax withholding tables by July 1, 2024, to reflect the updated rates and brackets in effect for tax year 2024. The bill would reduce revenues by \$1.2339 billion in fiscal year 2024–25 and \$751.9 million annually thereafter.

I have been proud to sign several income tax cuts during my time in office, including keeping—and, in fact, well exceeding—my promise to provide a ten percent, middle–class tax cut targeted to Wisconsin's working families. During my first term in office, I proudly signed one

of the largest tax cuts in Wisconsin state history, which provided \$2 billion in individual income tax relief over the biennium and approximately \$1 billion annually going forward. Through this historic tax cut, combined with the tax cuts I signed during my first year in office alone, 86 percent of Wisconsin taxpayers have seen an income tax cut of 15 percent or more, with 2.4 million taxpayers receiving relief. Through the income tax cuts I have already signed into law during my time in office, Wisconsin taxpayers will see \$1.5 billion in tax relief annually, primarily targeted to the middle class.

Most recently, I also proposed in my 2023–25 biennial budget to provide \$1.2 billion in targeted tax relief to working families, parents, veterans, caregivers, seniors, and student loan borrowers, among others. Unfortunately, Republican members of the Wisconsin State Legislature rejected my proposal, providing little to no justification for their decision to do so.

When we deliver tax relief for the people of Wisconsin—just as we have—it should be real relief aimed at helping Wisconsin's working families afford rising costs, and it should be responsible and sustainable, ensuring we

can keep taxes low now and into the future without causing devastating cuts to priorities like public schools and public safety down the road. Republican members of the Wisconsin State Legislature today once again fail to balance these important obligations.

Making sound financial decisions and being prudent with Wisconsin taxpayer dollars remains a top priority and always will for me. I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to fiscally irresponsible measures that would leave the State of Wisconsin unable to meet its basic obligations to adequately fund education, health care, public safety and aid to local governments in the 2025–27 biennium and beyond. Coupled with companion bills relating to increasing the retirement income exclusion and a married couple credit, these three bills

would reduce revenues by such a margin that it would likely force the state, even with ordinary revenue growth, to partially or fully drain the Budget Stabilization Fund just to provide bare minimum inflationary adjustments to key programs in the 2025–27 biennium.

Moreover, this bill could result in the state having to repay billions of dollars it received under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, completely reversing even under the best projected economic circumstances the progress we have made toward improving our state’s fiscal condition.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 1021: Increasing and expanding the retirement income subtraction

On February 13, 2024, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 1021 by a vote of 64 to 32, A.J. 2/13/24, p. 671.

On February 20, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 1021 by a vote of 23 to 9, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 850.

On March 1, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 1021, A.J. 3/1/24, p. 786.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 1, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 1021** in its entirety.

This bill expands the current individual income tax subtraction for retirement income to exclude, for claimants 65 or older, payments or distributions from qualified retirement plans and certain individual retirement accounts up to \$75,000, for single filers and married persons filing separately, and up to \$150,000, for married–joint filers, beginning in tax year 2024. The bill would reduce tax collections in fiscal year 2024–25 by \$658.2 million, and \$472.4 million annually thereafter.

I have been proud to sign several income tax cuts during my time in office, including keeping—and, in fact, well exceeding—my promise to provide a ten percent, middle–class tax cut targeted to Wisconsin’s working families. During my first term in office, I proudly signed one of the largest tax cuts in Wisconsin state history, which provided \$2 billion in individual income tax relief over the biennium and approximately \$1 billion annually going forward. Through this historic tax cut, combined with the tax cuts I signed during my first year in office alone, 86 percent of Wisconsin taxpayers have seen an income tax cut of 15 percent or more, with 2.4 million taxpayers receiving relief. Through the income tax cuts I have already signed into law during my time in office, Wisconsin taxpayers will see \$1.5 billion in tax relief annually, primarily targeted to the middle class.

Most recently, I also proposed in my 2023–25 biennial budget to provide \$1.2 billion in targeted tax relief to working families, parents, veterans, caregivers, seniors, and student loan borrowers, among others. Unfortunately, Republican members of the Wisconsin State Legislature rejected my proposal, providing little to no justification for their decision to do so.

When we deliver tax relief for the people of Wisconsin—just as we have—it should be real relief aimed at helping Wisconsin’s working families afford rising costs, and it should be responsible and sustainable, ensuring we can keep taxes low now and into the future without causing devastating cuts to priorities like public schools and public safety down the road. Republican members of the Wisconsin State Legislature today once again fail to balance these important obligations.

Making sound financial decisions and being prudent with Wisconsin taxpayer dollars remains a top priority and always will for me. I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to fiscally irresponsible measures that would leave the State of Wisconsin unable to meet its basic obligations to adequately fund education, health care, public safety and aid to local governments in the 2025–27 biennium and beyond. Coupled with companion bills relating to increasing the second bracket income thresholds and the married couple credit, these three bills

would reduce revenues by such a margin that it would likely force the state, even with ordinary revenue growth, to partially or fully drain the Budget Stabilization Fund just to provide bare minimum inflationary adjustments to key programs in the 2025–27 biennium.

Moreover, this bill could result in the state having to repay billions of dollars it received under the American

Rescue Plan Act of 2021, completely reversing even under the best projected economic circumstances the progress we have made toward improving our state’s fiscal condition.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 1022: The married persons credit

On February 13, 2024, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 1022 by a vote of 62 to 34, A.J. 2/13/24, p. 671.

On February 20, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 1022 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 850.

On March 1, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 1022, A.J. 3/1/24, p. 786.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 1, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 1022** in its entirety.

This bill expands the married persons credit against income tax liability to a maximum of \$870 from the current law maximum of \$480, beginning in tax year 2024. The bill would reduce individual income tax collections by \$169.0 million in fiscal year 2024–25 and \$160.9 million annually thereafter.

I have been proud to sign several income tax cuts during my time in office, including keeping—and in fact, well exceeding—my promise to provide a ten percent, middle-class tax cut targeted to Wisconsin’s working families. During my first term in office, I proudly signed one of the largest tax cuts in Wisconsin state history, which provided \$2 billion in individual income tax relief over the biennium and approximately \$1 billion annually going forward. Through this historic tax cut, combined with the tax cuts I signed during my first year in office alone, 86 percent of Wisconsin taxpayers have seen an income tax cut of 15 percent or more, with 2.4 million taxpayers receiving relief. Through the income tax cuts I have already signed into law during my time in office, Wisconsin taxpayers will see \$1.5 billion in tax relief annually, primarily targeted to the middle class.

Most recently, I also proposed in my 2023–25 biennial budget to provide \$1.2 billion in targeted tax relief to working families, parents, veterans, caregivers, seniors, and student loan borrowers, among others. Unfortunately, Republican members of the Wisconsin State Legislature rejected my proposal, providing little to no justification for their decision to do so.

When we deliver tax relief for the people of Wisconsin—just as we have—it should be real relief aimed at

helping Wisconsin’s working families afford rising costs, and it should be responsible and sustainable, ensuring we can keep taxes low now and into the future without causing devastating cuts to priorities like public schools and public safety down the road. Republican members of the Wisconsin State Legislature today once again fail to balance these important obligations.

Making sound financial decisions and being prudent with Wisconsin taxpayer dollars remains a top priority and always will for me. I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to fiscally irresponsible measures that would leave the State of Wisconsin unable to meet its basic obligations to adequately fund education, health care, public safety and aid to local governments in the 2025–27 biennium and beyond. Coupled with companion bills relating to increasing the second bracket income thresholds and a retirement income exclusion, these three bills would reduce revenues by such a margin that it would likely force the state, even with ordinary revenue growth, to partially or fully drain the Budget Stabilization Fund just to provide bare minimum inflationary adjustments to key programs in the 2025–27 biennium.

Moreover, this bill could result in the state having to repay billions of dollars it received under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, completely reversing even under the best projected economic circumstances the progress we have made toward improving our state’s fiscal condition.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 1030: The regulation of deer hunting in the northern forest zone

On February 22, 2024, the assembly adopted Assembly Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 1030 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 767, and passed Assembly Bill 1030, as amended, on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 767.

On March 12, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 1030 on a voice vote, S.J. 3/12/24, p. 918.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 1030, A.J. 3/29/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 1030** in its entirety.

This bill would prohibit the Department of Natural Resources from establishing an antlerless-only deer hunting season in the northern forest deer management zone and from issuing hunting authorizations for antlerless deer in the northern forest deer management zone. Any authorization that the department issues for a deer-hunting season in the northern forest deer management zone that is open only to hunters under the age of 16 may only authorize the killing of one deer, which may be antlered or antlerless. The bill also prohibits the department from issuing more than one authorization for an antlered deer in the northern forest deer management zone during an open season for hunting deer with a bow and arrow or crossbow, or from issuing more than one authorization during an open season for hunting deer with a muzzle-loading firearm or a firearm. These provisions would be in effect for four years.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to circumventing the established County Deer Advisory Council process, which provides opportunities for public input on proposed deer population estimates and harvest quotas. The councils may recommend a bucks-only season based on population estimates and feedback from the public. Many deer management units have successfully

implemented bucks-only hunts in recent years due to concerns over low deer population estimates.

I am also vetoing this bill because I object to limiting the ability of the Department of Natural Resources and other public and private landowners to respond to local deer population levels. Deer distribution varies across the northern forest zone and effective management requires a variety of solutions to address locally overabundant deer populations. This bill would limit flexibility for landowners to address issues on their properties that may be influenced by unique habitat factors.

Balancing the goal of providing hunters with successful hunting experiences and ensuring healthy forest habitats in Northern Wisconsin requires both collaboration and the flexibility to address challenges as they arise. The one-size-fits-all solution proposed in this bill does not strike this balance, as it limits property owners from making decisions to best manage their land and disregards public input provided via County Deer Advisory Councils.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 1065: Prohibiting University of Wisconsin System institutions and technical colleges from using loyalty pledges and requiring them to make certain information publicly available

On February 22, 2024, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 1065 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 769.

On March 12, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 1065 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 3/12/24, p. 918.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 1065, A.J. 3/29/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 1065** in its entirety.

This bill prohibits any University of Wisconsin System institution or Wisconsin Technical College System district board from requiring applicants for admission or financial aid, students, student groups, or faculty to pledge an allegiance to, support for, or opposition to a political ideology or movement, including with respect to diversity, equity, or inclusion, as a condition of admission or financial aid, recognition or funding for a student organization, or certain employment-based considerations (including hiring, performance reviews, promotions, and research approval). Additionally, institutions and district boards may not request or require such pledges and may not grant admission or financial aid, provide recognition or funding for a student organization (or withhold such recognition or funding), or hire, reappoint, or promote faculty on the basis of the viewpoints expressed in such a pledge.

Under current law, no individual may be discriminated against or be denied admission to, or participation, in a higher education institution due to an individual's race, color[,] creed, religion, sex, national origin, disability, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or marital or parental status. Further, according to the University of Wisconsin System's testimony on the bill, System does not require any systemwide written or spoken loyalty pledge to any political ideology or movement for any employee or student. I am therefore vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to it as duplicative and unnecessary.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Assembly Bill 1089: Interest rates on late, nondelinquent taxes and on overpayments

On February 22, 2024, the assembly passed Assembly Bill 1089 by a vote of 62 to 35, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 771.

On March 12, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Bill 1089 by a vote of 25 to 7, S.J. 3/12/24, p. 919.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Assembly Bill 1089, A.J. 3/29/24, p. 819.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 1089** in its entirety.

This bill would modify certain interest rates that the Department of Revenue (DOR) applies to unpaid taxes and fees that are not yet delinquent and to overpayments of amounts to be refunded. These modifications include reducing the current law rate of 12 percent per year applicable to certain late, nondelinquent taxes and fees owed to DOR to six percent per year and increasing the interest rate on certain overpayments of taxes and fees refunded by DOR from three percent per year to six percent per year. The bill would further modify the interest rate reduction on delinquent taxes that may be available in cases where the Secretary of Revenue determines that the reduction is fair and equitable, from the current law reduced rate of 12 percent per year to six percent per year. The bill would reduce general fund revenues by \$41.5 million in fiscal year 2024–25 and \$80.5 million in fiscal year 2025–26.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to its substantial costs at a time when the Wisconsin State Legislature has refused to make meaningful, sustainable investments to reduce out-of-pocket child care costs for working families, ensure child care providers can continue to operate, expand paid leave, improve high-speed internet statewide, and prevent higher education campus closures and layoffs, among other key areas of public investment.

Moreover, this bill, combined with others, could result in the state having to repay billions of dollars it received under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, completely reversing even under the best projected economic circumstances the progress we have made toward improving our state's fiscal condition.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

September 2023 Special Session Senate Bill 1: Fall workforce package

On October 17, 2023, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to September 2023 Special Session Senate Bill 1 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 10/17/23, p. 538, and passed September 2023 Special Session Senate Bill 1, as amended, by a vote of 21 to 11, S.J. 10/17/23, p. 538.

On November 14, 2023, the assembly concurred in September 2023 Special Session Senate Bill 1 by a vote of 62 to 36, A.J. 11/14/23, p. 473.

On November 20, 2023, the governor vetoed September 2023 Special Session Senate Bill 1, S.J. 11/20/23, p. 633.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

November 20, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 1** of the September 2023 Special Session in its entirety.

In addition to other changes, this bill specifically: (a) decreases the individual income tax rate in the third tax bracket from 5.3 percent to 4.4 percent, collapsing the current-law second and third brackets into one; (b) increases the child and dependent care tax credit; (c) increases the private school tuition deduction; (d) expands availability of reciprocal professional credentials; (e) requires the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) to review other state health care credentialing requirements to determine equivalence, comparability, or similarity to Wisconsin’s requirements; (f) modifies DSPS requirements related to investigation of credential applicant backgrounds, including permitting a determination by an applicant’s employer as an alternative to a DSPS investigation; (g) prohibits DSPS or applicable boards from requiring passage of a statutes and rules examination for certain regulated professions; (h) modifies professional credential renewal periods; (i) modifies the preliminary credential process for applicants from another state; (j) ratifies Wisconsin’s participation in several interstate professional licensure compacts, including compacts relating to audiology and speech-language pathology, physician assistants, social workers, and counselors; (k) establishes a decennial review and reporting requirement relating to the state’s occupational licensure requirements; (l) requires the Department of Administration (DOA) to submit a report on any bill introduced by the Legislature that pertains to obtaining a professional credential or business license; (m) creates apprenticeship grant programs at the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) and Higher Educational Aids Board (HEAB); (n) creates commercial driver training grants to be administered by the Department of Workforce Development (DWD); (o) modifies work search requirements applicable to unemployment insurance benefit claimants; and (p) requires DWD to immediately promulgate rules to establish a drug testing program for unemployment insurance recipients.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to Republicans in the Wisconsin State Legislature gutting my comprehensive workforce plan to instead pass a com-

pletely unserious proposal that fails to meaningfully and sensibly address the workforce challenges that have plagued Wisconsin for a decade. It is clear today Republicans remain disinterested in passing real solutions to the most pressing challenges facing our state.

I object to this proposal because, unlike the comprehensive workforce plan I announced now more than 100 days ago, this bill does not make direct investments to help parents afford child care and keep child care provider doors open today or prevent our child care industry’s collapse in the long term; this bill does not expand paid family and medical leave for working families to help ensure Wisconsin can compete against neighboring states; this bill does not help substantively bolster high-need sectors of our state’s workforce, including the state’s education and healthcare workforces; this bill does not provide substantial support or investments for the state’s higher education institutions, including the University of Wisconsin–Madison’s engineering building project, aimed at preventing further campus closures and layoffs and helping recruit, train, and retain workers.

I support providing real, responsible tax relief for Wisconsin’s working families, as I have clearly demonstrated, having enacted income tax reductions during my time in office that now total \$1.5 billion annually. My commitment to supporting working families, especially those that have experienced rising costs in recent years, is why I delivered on my promise of proposing a 10-percent, middle-class tax cut in my biennial budget that would have provided \$1.2 billion in targeted tax relief to working families, parents, veterans, caregivers, seniors, and student loan borrowers, among others. Republicans rejected that proposal and provided little, if any, justification for doing so.

When we deliver tax relief, we should do so responsibly by ensuring we can keep taxes low now and into the future—much like the tax cuts I have been proud to sign into law—and without driving our state into debt that will cause devastating cuts to priorities like public schools and public safety down the road. Republicans once again fail to balance these important priorities.

This amended bill is a fiscally irresponsible measure that would leave the state of Wisconsin unable to meet its basic duties to provide adequate funding in child

care, education, healthcare, public safety, and aid to local governments in the 2025–27 biennium and beyond. The income tax change now included in this amended bill are so steep that they would require the state, even with ordinary revenue growth, to partially or fully drain the Budget Stabilization Fund—which currently sits at the highest balance in state history—just to provide bare minimum inflationary adjustments to key programs in the future, even after the Legislature already failed to provide adequate funding in the most recent budget. Even under the best economic circumstances and outlook, this bill would represent a complete reversal of the progress we have made during my time in office to improve our state’s fiscal conditions. Responsible tax relief must be provided in the context of other key responsibilities, and the Legislature has failed to make any real effort to do so. Again.

Further, I object to the multitude of provisions that would significantly increase the workload of DSPS without providing the agency with expenditure or position authority to manage the increase. The Wisconsin State Legislature is acutely aware of urgent resource needs at the department but repeatedly refuses to provide the agency with a level of additional staffing and funding that is commensurate with the need. By heaping new responsibilities on the agency without increased support, the Legislature has set the agency and its customers on a path to increased processing times, which in turn negatively impacts our workforce. Moreover, the bill would allow individuals to receive or renew professional licenses without proper due diligence. By allowing an employer to attest to a license applicant’s arrest and conviction records in order to obtain or renew a license, the state is abdicating its responsibility to ensure that laws and regulations are followed and that issuance of a license is not a danger to public safety. Employer attestation fails to ensure careful review of an applicant’s background and is inadequate to keep the people of Wisconsin safe.

Additionally, I object to the inclusion of changes to unemployment insurance work search and drug testing requirements as they create additional barriers for individuals applying for and receiving benefits from a program that is designed to support individuals and families experiencing economic hardship. As I have indicated to this Legislature on multiple occasions, I also object to these provisions because modifications to the state’s unemployment insurance law should be considered as part of the long-established process of review and recommendation by the Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council, or in consultation with the council and Department of Workforce Development. The process is intended to ensure that any proposed modifications

reflect the expertise and agreement of employers, workers, and the department.

Finally, I object to foisting new financial aid programs upon WTCS and HEAB without providing state funding. Requiring the agencies to absorb new program costs will decrease the availability of dollars for existing programs. While programs that seek to assist individuals in completing apprenticeships are laudable, the Legislature should employ the state’s ample surplus funds to ensure that other students in higher education are not negatively impacted.

It is unconscionable that, even as the state enjoys its highest budget surplus in state history and maintains a record-high balance in its ‘rainy day fund,’ the Legislature failed to take the opportunity I offered through this Special Session to meaningfully and seriously address some of our state’s most pressing issues. While I was glad to direct a \$170 million investment to help stave off an urgent collapse of our state’s child care industry, this stopgap measure is not a permanent solution. As many members of this Legislature have both publicly and privately acknowledged, our state has long experienced a shrinking labor pool due to several long-term factors that, coupled with our state’s low unemployment and high workforce participation, are causing Wisconsin’s small businesses, farmers and producers, hospitals and healthcare sectors, and schools, among other critical employers and industries, to face significant challenges filling available jobs—challenges that we know will only be exacerbated by the looming child care crisis facing our state. To be sure, this is not the end of the conversation on child care—that is a promise.

In addition, it is also clear to me—and clearly many of our state’s largest employers agree—that if we want to educate, retain, and recruit talented workers, we have to make sure our UW System and higher education institutions statewide have the means to deliver world-class curriculum, programming, and support for students. Those efforts must include investing in a new, state-of-the-art engineering building at our state’s flagship campus that, without the state’s prompt support, could see an increased cost of approximately \$400 million in the next biennium. Similarly, those efforts must include releasing already-approved wage increases for about 35,000 UW System faculty and staff that continue to be unconstitutionally obstructed by Republicans for no real reason whatsoever.

Truly addressing the longstanding workforce challenges facing our state must likewise include efforts to ensure workers who are already participating in Wisconsin’s workforce can remain in the workforce, efforts to recruit, train, and retain workers in key industries and sectors facing significant challenges, as well as initiatives to ensure Wisconsin can be competitive in retaining and recruiting talented workers, such as paid family and medical leave.

Absent real, meaningful efforts by this Legislature to get serious about our shrinking workforce, Wisconsin’s ability to maintain our economic momentum will suffer mightily. I urge the Legislature to revisit their work, do the right thing, and send me a bill that contains the serious solutions we know Wisconsinites support to address

the serious challenges that have plagued our state for generations.
Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor

Senate Bill 21: The value of tangible personal property allowed in state correctional facilities

On March 22, 2023, the senate passed Senate Bill 21 on a voice vote, S.J. 3/22/23, p. 153.
On January 16, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 21 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/16/24, p. 553.
On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 21, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 942.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 49: Restricting state agencies and political subdivisions from regulation of utility service based on the type or source of energy

On June 7, 2023, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 49 on a voice vote, S.J. 6/7/23, p. 270, and passed Senate Bill 49, as amended, by a vote of 22 to 11, S.J. 6/7/23, p. 270.
On June 21, 2023, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 49 on a voice vote, A.J. 6/21/23, p. 213.
On August 4, 2023, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 49, S.J. 8/7/23, p. 396.
On September 14, 2023, the senate passed Senate Bill 49 notwithstanding the objections of the governor by a vote of 22 to 11, S.J. 9/14/23, p. 439.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

August 4, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 49** in its entirety.
This bill would prohibit state agencies and local units of government from restricting the connection or reconnection of a utility service based on the type or source of energy to be provided. The bill also prohibits state agencies and local units of government from discriminating

against a public utility, an electric cooperative or a liquefied petroleum gas retailer based on the nature or source of the service to be provided to a consumer.
I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature’s continued efforts to preempt local control and undermine trust in local governments across our state.

Additionally, this bill could jeopardize our communities' and our state's future ability to transition away from fossil fuels or to collectively combat climate change. The state should be a partner—not an obstacle to—addressing the unique challenges facing our local communities.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 52: Creating a deicer applicators registration program

On January 16, 2024, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 2 to Senate Bill 52 by a vote of 19 to 13, S.J. 1/16/24, p. 717, and passed Senate Bill 52, as amended, by a vote of 17 to 15, S.J. 1/16/24, p. 721.

On February 22, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 52 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 751.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 52, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 942.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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 deicer 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

Senate Bill 98: Verifying citizenship of individuals on the official voter registration list and contents of operator’s licenses and identification cards

On November 7, 2023, the senate passed Senate Bill 98 by a vote of 21 to 10, S.J. 11/7/23, p. 584.

On November 9, 2023, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 98 on a voice vote, A.J. 11/9/23, p. 446.

On December 6, 2023, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 98, S.J. 12/7/23, p. 656.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

December 6, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 98** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Department of Transportation to mark identification cards of individuals who are not U.S. citizens with the phrase “not valid for voting purposes” or another recognizable identification and transmit certain personally identifiable information to the Elections Commission in order to verify the citizenship status of individuals on the official voter registration list.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to this bill requiring state-issued identification cards to have a ‘recognizable indication’ that could result in certain individuals being treated differently or unfairly in every day, non-electoral situations this legislation fails to consider or contemplate. An individual must already attest that they are a U.S. citizen in order to register to vote, and any individual who attempts to fraudulently or improperly vote is already subject to punishment under current law. This bill does not alter or affect these facts in any way;

vetoing this bill does not alter or affect those facts in any way, either.

This bill does, however, fail to acknowledge and meaningfully consider the many different ways in which state-issued identifications are used in everyday settings wholly unrelated to voting. Despite few, if any, verified cases of voter registration by a noncitizen, this bill would effectively mark all of the identification documents of an entire group of Wisconsin residents as noncitizens. While I do not object to the data-sharing of citizenship information between the Department of Transportation and the Elections Commission, this cooperation could be accomplished without potentially causing certain individuals to be treated unfairly or perpetuating false narratives about our elections.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 139: Establishing a statewide wolf population goal

On October 17, 2023, the senate passed Senate Bill 139 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 10/17/23, p. 527.

On January 25, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 139 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/25/24, p. 598.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 139, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 943.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 145: Advanced practice registered nurses

On October 17, 2023, the senate adopted Senate Amendment 2 to Senate Bill 145 on a voice vote, S.J. 10/17/23, p. 534, and passed Senate Bill 145, as amended, by a vote of 23 to 9, S.J. 10/17/23, p. 534.

On January 25, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 145, A.J. 1/25/24, p. 599.

On April 4, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 145, S.J. 4/4/24, p. 958.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 4, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 145** in its entirety.

This bill creates a new license for advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), administered by the Board of Nursing attached to the Department of Safety and Professional Services. This bill specifies certain requirements for APRN licensure, defines specialty designations associated with the APRN license, and sets forth certain requirements and restrictions related to APRN practice.

I am vetoing this bill, which received bipartisan opposition in both chambers of the Wisconsin State Legislature, in its entirety because I object to new licensure and practice standards for APRNs, especially those APRNs practicing independently, that do not provide adequate experience requirements, titling protections, and safeguards for patients who may be treated for chronic pain management. Certainly, nurses are critical to the healthcare system in Wisconsin and help fill gaps in access to healthcare services resulting from a lack of healthcare providers generally. Ensuring we have qualified professionals who have the appropriate education, training, experience, and supervision to provide care to Wisconsinites is critically important.

According to the state Department of Health Services, in 2022, 1,464 Wisconsinites died by an opioid overdose.

Tragically, more people die of opioid overdoses than car crashes in Wisconsin. Effective interventions for pain management and high-quality healthcare treatments are critical for patients' quality of life and well-being, especially during difficult phases of life, as is balancing these obligations with the safety and long-term health of those same patients.

I support creating an APRN license and allowing for independent practice of APRNs, and have previously pursued measures to do so that were rejected by the Legislature's Joint Committee on Finance. Nevertheless, several concerns I consistently raised throughout this and previous legislative sessions, which could well have been addressed during the legislative process, remain unresolved in the bill before me today.

I welcome the opportunity to sign a version of this proposal that addresses these outstanding issues, and I look forward to working with nurses, doctors, and legislators toward a bipartisan proposal I am hopeful to enact during the next legislative session.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 158: Preliminary health care credentials granted to previously unlicensed individuals and ratification of the Social Work Licensure Compact

On June 14, 2023, the senate adopted Senate Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 158 on a voice vote, S.J. 6/14/23, p. 297, and passed Senate Bill 158, as amended, by a vote of 22 to 11, S.J. 6/14/23, p. 297.

On January 16, 2024, the assembly adopted Assembly Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 158 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/16/24, p. 554, and concurred in Senate Bill 158, as amended, on a voice vote, A.J. 1/16/24, p. 554.

On January 16, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 158 on a voice vote, S.J. 1/16/24, p. 798.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 158, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 943.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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 depart[ment] 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

Senate Bill 186: Procedures for reviewing commercial building plans

On January 16, 2024, the senate passed Senate Bill 186 on a voice vote, S.J. 1/16/24, p. 718.

On February 13, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 186 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/13/24, p. 663.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 186, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 944.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 187: Local government review of commercial building plans

On January 16, 2024, the senate passed Senate Bill 187 on a voice vote, S.J. 1/16/24, p. 718.

On February 13, 2024, the assembly adopted Assembly Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 187 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/13/24, p. 663, and concurred in Senate Bill 187, as amended, on a voice vote, A.J. 2/13/24, p. 663.

On February 20, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 187 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 837.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 187, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 945.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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 Pro-

fessional 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

Senate Bill 188: Permission to start construction of a commercial building before plan approval

On January 16, 2024, the senate passed Senate Bill 188 on a voice vote, S.J. 1/16/24, p. 718.

On February 13, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 188 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/13/24, p. 663.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 188, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 945.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 216: Whip lights on all-terrain and utility terrain vehicles

On October 17, 2023, the senate passed Senate Bill 216 on a voice vote, S.J. 10/17/23, p. 528.

On January 25, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 216 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/25/24, p. 600.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 216, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 945.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 217: Passenger restrictions on all-terrain vehicles

On October 17, 2023, the senate passed Senate Bill 217 by a vote of 21 to 11, S.J. 10/17/23, p. 528.

On January 25, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 217 on a voice vote, A.J. 1/25/24, p. 599.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 217, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 946.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 312: Programs and requirements to address perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances and modifying administrative rules related to emergency utility services and test wells for community water systems

On November 14, 2023, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 2 (as amended by Senate Amendment 1) to Senate Bill 312 on a voice vote, S.J. 11/14/23, p. 614, and passed Senate Bill 312, as amended, by a vote of 22 to 11, S.J. 11/14/23, p. 614.

On February 22, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 312 by a vote of 62 to 35, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 754.

On April 9, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 312, S.J. 4/9/24, p. 963.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

April 9, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 312** in its entirety.

This bill creates or modifies grant programs in the Department of Natural Resources to address perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination, including a PFAS municipal grant program, an innocent landowner grant program, the clean water fund program, the safe drinking water loan program, and the well compensation grant program. The bill also permits municipal utilities and sewerage districts to use revenues for up to half of the cost of PFAS reduction measures and places new limitations on the Department of Natural Resources and the Public Service Commission related to the regulation of and reporting on PFAS. The bill further places a number of requirements on the Department of Natural Resources, including directives related to PFAS studies and laboratory activities in conjunction with the Board of Regents, PFAS-containing firefighting foam, portable wastewater treatment systems, testing for PFAS and reporting on PFAS contamination.

For nearly 280 days as of this writing, a \$125 million state investment to combat PFAS statewide, made available through the 2023–25 biennial budget passed by the Wisconsin State Legislature that I enacted last July, has languished in Madison unspent. At any point during the interceding nearly 280 days since I enacted the biennial budget, the Republican-controlled Joint Committee on Finance could have released the \$125 million investment to combat PFAS statewide. Republican committee members have, unfortunately, consistently refused despite ample opportunity and numerous requests by me and others to do so.

Importantly, Senate Bill 312 has virtually nothing to do with releasing the \$125 million investment secured through the 2023–25 biennial budget process to combat PFAS statewide: Senate Bill 312 appropriates no new funding; does not impact in any way the existing \$125 million biennial budget investment to fight PFAS; and would not in and of itself release the \$125 million biennial budget investment to fight PFAS. Republican members of the Joint Committee on Finance may release the already-approved \$125 million investment to combat PFAS contamination across our state at any time, notwithstanding my action on Senate Bill 312 today. I once again urge the Joint Committee on Finance to immediately release our already-approved \$125 million investment immediately and without any further delay so my administration can work in earnest to support communities impacted by PFAS contamination across our state.

I will not sign legislation that has any chance of letting those who cause PFAS contamination off the hook for remediating their contamination, and I cannot accept the Legislature’s attempts to shift both the responsibility and cost of cleaning up PFAS contamination to Wisconsin taxpayers rather than polluters.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to limiting the department’s ability to address PFAS contamination. The provisions of this bill would require certain test results for PFAS to exceed a promulgated standard before the department may take certain enforcement actions. This prohibition would limit the department’s ability to require action to protect public health or the environment under the state’s spills law, especially as Republicans in the Wisconsin State Legislature refuse to act to allow the department to continue the rulemaking process to set standards for PFAS in groundwater. The authors demanded this provision stay in the bill, claiming it was needed to ensure farmers who unknowingly spread biosolids containing PFAS would not be subject to remediation requirements or have their land values impacted, but a recent study by Midwest Environmental Advocates shows that the department has never brought enforcement action against a farmer who unknowingly spread biosolids containing PFAS. And importantly, the provision included in this bill goes far beyond this one example, and could even result in a polluter who knowingly released PFAS into the environment being shielded from accountability for the cleanup. I am disappointed the bill authors used our farmers as scapegoats to try to eliminate an important tool for the department to hold those who contaminate our state’s waters accountable, despite opposition to the bill from farming organizations like the Wisconsin Farmers Union. This provision would risk the health and safety of the residents of the state by enacting more hurdles to obstruct the department’s response to dangerous contamination throughout the state.

I am also vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to limiting the Department of Natural Resources’ ability to publicly disclose the results of PFAS testing conducted under a municipal grant program or through voluntary sample collection. The provisions of this bill would prohibit the department from disclosing these testing results to the public unless the department notifies grantees or landowners at least 72 hours prior, conflicting with the department’s current practice of disclosing testing results within 24 hours. This provision would limit the department’s ability to communicate with the public regarding PFAS contamination.

Further, I am vetoing this bill because I object to limiting the department's ability to collect PFAS samples throughout the state. The provisions of this bill would require the department to receive written consent from a landowner to collect samples through voluntary testing, even when there is an imminent risk to public safety or the environment. This prohibition would limit the department's ability to respond to the most severe contamination cases and potentially risk the health and safety of the residents of the state.

Finally, I am vetoing this bill because the provisions included in this bill are largely unnecessary for combating PFAS contamination in this state. Under the provisions of Senate Bill 312, the department would still need to request the release of funds under s. 13.10, as the legislation does not allocate any of the funding available in the PFAS Trust Fund. Under 2023 Wisconsin Act 19, which is current law, the Department of Natural Resources already can request funding from the PFAS Trust Fund under s. 13.10, and the department can administer these funds once provided to the department using existing department authority. On December 19, 2023, the department submitted a request under s. 13.10 to the Legislature's Joint Committee on Finance for the release of the full \$125 million from the PFAS Trust Fund to address PFAS contamination. The committee has yet to act on the request from December. On February 27, 2024, in the spirit of compromise, the department submitted an updated request for the release of funds under s. 13.10. The department's revised request outlines in detail how it would utilize \$125 million in funding over the 2023–25

biennium and mirrors the municipal grant and innocent landowner grant provisions included in this bill. It is my hope that by including these grant provisions, where we have common ground, the Joint Committee on Finance will act with due haste to approve the department's request.

Addressing PFAS contamination has been and continues to be a top priority for me and my administration. Starting with my 2019–21 executive budget and continuing with my 2021–23 and 2023–25 executive budgets, I have consistently offered comprehensive efforts to combat PFAS contamination statewide. While I appreciate the Legislature has finally decided to join this important work, the bill before me today is not good enough. This bill does not do nearly enough to combat the PFAS contamination challenges we face as a state, it does not do enough to protect Wisconsin taxpayers from being forced to clean up the messes polluters make, and it does not do enough to help ensure the Department of Natural Resources can continue to protect and clean up our water.

I look forward to continuing to work with local leaders and communities, stakeholders, and the Legislature to find workable, meaningful, and bipartisan solutions to remediate PFAS contamination across Wisconsin, clean up our water and natural resources, and protect Wisconsin taxpayers from being forced to pay the price of cleaning up others' pollution.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 316: Aquatic plant management plans and permit exemptions

On February 20, 2024, the senate adopted Senate Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 316 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 838, and passed Senate Bill 316, as amended, on a voice vote, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 838.

On February 20, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 316, A.J. 2/20/24, p. 719.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 316, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 946.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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 manage-

ment 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

Senate Bill 335: Allowing school boards to employ a school district administrator who is not licensed by the Department of Public Instruction

On February 20, 2024, the senate passed Senate Bill 335 by a vote of 21 to 11, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 839.

On February 20, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 335 by a vote of 63 to 35, A.J. 2/20/24, p. 720.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 335, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 946.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 436: Permits authorizing the employment of minors

On October 17, 2023, the senate passed Senate Bill 436 by a vote of 21 to 11, S.J. 10/17/23, p. 533.

On February 13, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 436 by a vote of 62 to 34, A.J. 2/13/24, p. 666.

On April 8, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 436, S.J. 4/8/24, p. 962.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 436** in its entirety.

This bill eliminates the requirement for employers to obtain work permits to employ minors who are 14 or 15 years old, for employers to obtain street trade permits to employ minors, and for minors to obtain identification cards to work in street trades. The bill also eliminates provisions relating the issuance of certificates of age, eliminates provisions authorizing the collection of fees for the issuance of work and street trade permits and certificates of age, and modifies certain penalty provisions relating to injuries sustained by minors who are illegally employed to reflect the elimination of permit requirements.

Wisconsin faces generational challenges recruiting, training, and retaining talented workers. A year ago, our state unemployment rate hit a record-low of 2.4 percent. Last year, Wisconsin had the all-time lowest number of unemployed workers ever in modern history. And our state's labor force participation rate also consistently remained above the national average throughout the year. Wisconsinites work hard, and they are working. Wisconsin needs real, meaningful, and long-term solutions to address our state's pressing workforce challenges, improve our ability to retain and recruit talented workers, and ensure our workforce and our economy are prepared to meet the demands of the 21st Century.

Asking more kids to work is not a serious plan or solution to address our statewide workforce issues.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to eliminating a process that ensures our kids are protected from employers that may exploit youth and inexperience or subject children to hazardous or illegal working conditions.

The stated justification of this bill is to ensure parents are involved in the decision-making process regarding a job for their child; however, currently, the law requires parents to have such involvement because the minor's parent

or guardian must consent to the employment. This bill eliminates a process that ensures parents and guardians have knowledge of employment so they can, in their judgment, determine whether a job may be detrimental to their young worker's health, safety, social development, or academic success.

Street trade jobs pose heightened dangers to child workers. Youth who are hired to sell or solicit door-to-door often are unsupervised while interacting with strangers. Therefore, currently, minors working in street trades must obtain an identification card from the department or a designee, which in turn provides the department with enhanced ability to ensure minors are not working outside of prohibited hours or if their welfare, school attendance, or academic performance is negatively affected by the job. This bill repeals the requirement that minors obtain an identification card to engage in street trades, and I object to eliminating the department's ability to track and monitor these kids and their employment. Although it was 25 years ago, the tragedy of the 1999 van accident that killed six young people and rendered a 15-year-old girl a quadriplegic continues to be a reminder that we must fiercely protect child workers because not all employers have kids' best interests in mind.

The bill further weakens child labor protections by eliminating child labor permit fees. These fees currently support a position at the Department of Workforce Development that helps monitor compliance with child labor laws. I object to defunding this position. For all of these reasons, I am vetoing this bill to retain current law protections for child workers.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 466: Prohibiting firearms merchant category codes in payment card transactions and prohibiting government lists of firearm owners

On January 16, 2024, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 466 on a voice vote, S.J. 1/16/24, p. 719, and passed Senate Bill 466, as amended, by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 1/16/24, p. 719.

On January 18, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 466 by a vote of 62 to 35, A.J. 1/18/24, p. 576.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 466, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 946.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 517: Court-issued criminal complaints if the person's actions were in self-defense

On February 13, 2024, the senate passed Senate Bill 517 by a vote of 21 to 10, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 801.

On February 15, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 517 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/15/24, p. 694.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 517, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 947.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 549: Allowing representatives of certain federally chartered youth membership organizations to provide information to pupils on public school property

On February 13, 2024, the senate adopted Senate Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 549 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 802, and passed Senate Bill 549, as amended, on a voice vote, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 802.

On February 20, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 549 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/20/24, p. 725.

On March 21, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 549, S.J. 3/22/24, p. 934.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 21, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 549** in its entirety.

Beginning in the 2024–25 school year, this bill requires the principal of a public school or independent charter school to schedule at least one date and time (which may be noninstructional time) at the start of the school year upon request of a federally chartered youth membership organization to allow the organization to visit the school and encourage students to join the organization.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to undermining local decision-making regarding whether organizations may visit school buildings to recruit students for membership. I have long supported the important work of youth organizations designed to promote civic participation, good citizenry, and lifelong skills of respect, leadership, and service. However, I cannot support legislation that strips locally elected school board officials, administrators, and school principals of existing decision-

making authority to determine permissible entry to school grounds during the instructional day or after.

Additionally, this bill may conflict with existing federal law. The 1984 Equal Access Act requires a federally funded public secondary school that permits at least one noncurriculum-related student group to meet on school premises during noninstructional time to provide equal access to all student organizations, regardless of viewpoint, philosophy, or speech. A state mandate requiring access to schools for a small, specific list of organizations may run afoul of the right of other groups to such a limited open forum, leaving school district board members, administrators, and principals vulnerable to potential litigation.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 608: A license to teach based on working as a paraprofessional in a school district

On February 20, 2024, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 2 to Senate Bill 608 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 840, and passed Senate Bill 608, as amended, by a vote of 21 to 11, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 840.

On February 20, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 608 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/20/24, p. 726.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 608, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 948.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 613: Limiting the recovery of noneconomic damages from a commercial motor vehicle carrier

On February 20, 2024, the senate passed Senate Bill 613 by a vote of 21 to 11, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 841.

On February 20, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 613 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/20/24, p. 727.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 613, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 949.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 617: Indicia of registration for electric vehicles

On February 20, 2024, the senate passed Senate Bill 617 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 841.

On February 22, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 617 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 775.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 617, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 949.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 641: Eliminating the prohibitions on electric weapons

On February 13, 2024, the senate passed Senate Bill 641 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 803.

On February 15, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 641 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/15/24, p. 696.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 641, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 949.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 667: Domestic asset preservation trusts

On February 20, 2024, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 667 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 841, and passed Senate Bill 667, as amended, on a voice vote, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 841.

On February 22, 2024, the assembly adopted Assembly Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 667 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 776, and concurred in Senate Bill 667, as amended, on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 776.

On March 12, 2024, the senate concurred in Assembly Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 667, S.J. 3/12/24, p. 910.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 667, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 950.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 688: Local government competitive bidding thresholds and requiring school districts to utilize competitive bidding

On February 20, 2024, the senate adopted Senate Amendments 1 and 2 to Senate Bill 688 on voice votes, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 842, and passed Senate Bill 688, as amended, by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 842.

On February 20, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 688 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/20/24, p. 729.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 688, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 950.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 736: Postelection audits by the Legislative Audit Bureau

On February 13, 2024, the senate passed Senate Bill 736 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 803.

On February 20, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 736 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/20/24, p. 730.

On March 21, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 736, S.J. 3/22/24, p. 935.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 21, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 736** in its entirety.

This bill would require the Legislative Audit Bureau to conduct a performance audit of election processes following a general election. The bill would also require the Elections Commission to assist counties and municipalities with the audit. The commission would randomly select four counties and one city and one village from each of those counties for the bureau to audit. One of the selected counties must be one of the ten most populous counties in the state. The bill would grant the bureau the authority to physically handle and examine all original election materials, such as ballots and absentee ballot certificates, although municipal clerks would maintain custody and management authority over the retention and security of the election records. The public would be allowed to observe the audit in observation areas consistent with current law. Under the bill, any person may commence an action in circuit court to compel compliance with the audit procedures, and if a court finds that an election official or the commission is noncompliant, the official or commission could be subject to a forfeiture of \$500 for each day of noncompliance. In addition, the bureau would be required to report any noncompliance to the Legislature. Finally, the bill would require the bureau

to submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Legislature no later than June 30 of the odd-numbered year following the election.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Wisconsin State Legislature's ongoing efforts to interfere with and usurp control over election administration and undermine Wisconsin's election administration system the Legislature itself installed mere years ago. Wisconsin state law already provides robust protections to ensure our elections are safe, fair, and secure, including requiring post-election audits overseen by the bipartisan Wisconsin Elections Commission that are more comprehensive and expansive than the process created and overseen by the Legislature under this bill.

The Elections Commission already audits the performance of voting systems to determine the error rate of the system in counting ballots after every general election. If the error rate exceeds the rate permitted under federal standards, the commission must take remedial action or order remedial action to be taken to ensure compliance with the standards.

Further, where this bill would require an audit of a few municipalities in four counties, the current audit process reaches all 72 counties. As of 2022, the Wisconsin Elec-

tions Commission audits 10 percent (approximately 368) of all reporting units following a general election. After every election, the commission randomly selects units from within the municipalities to audit. For each approved voting system in the state, at least five reporting units of that voting system must be audited. If not, additional reporting units are randomly selected from under-represented voting equipment groups until at least five of each type are represented. Additionally, at least one reporting unit in every county must be randomly selected.

Existing post-election audits required and conducted under current state law ensure Wisconsin’s elections are safe, fair, and secure; no need exists for the Legislature to create and oversee a separate, duplicative, and less effective process.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Senate Bill 836: Imposing conditions on a juvenile between a plea hearing and a fact-finding hearing or disposition hearing

On February 13, 2024, the senate passed Senate Bill 836 by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 805.

On February 22, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 836 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 762.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 836, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 950.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 916: Requiring local governments to designate an individual for consultation required under a federal program regarding refugee resettlement and assistance

On February 20, 2024, the senate adopted Senate Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 916 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 845, and passed Senate Bill 916, as amended, by a vote of 22 to 10, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 845.

On February 22, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 916 by a vote of 62 to 35, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 767.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 916, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 951.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 917: Student teaching requirement for teacher preparatory programs

On February 13, 2024, the senate passed Senate Bill 917 by a vote of 23 to 9, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 807.

On February 20, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 917 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/20/24, p. 738.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 917, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 951.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 932: Modifications to building program project budgets, selection of project architects and engineers, single prime contracting, agency cooperation with energy conservation contractors, and timeline for claims before the Claims Board

On February 13, 2024, the senate adopted Senate Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 932 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 807, and passed Senate Bill 932, as amended, on a voice vote, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 807.

On February 22, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 932 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 765.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 932, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 952.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Senate Bill 933: Prohibiting discrimination in organ transplantation and donation on the basis of an individual's vaccination status

On February 20, 2024, the senate passed Senate Bill 933 by a vote of 21 to 11, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 845.

On February 22, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 933 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 764.

On March 29, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 933, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 952.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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 unne-

cessary 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

Senate Bill 1014: Grants for hospital emergency department services

On February 20, 2024, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 1014 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 847, and passed Senate Bill 1014, as amended, by a vote of 20 to 12, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 847.

On February 22, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 1014 by a vote of 63 to 34, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 770.

On February 28, 2024, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 1014, S.J. 2/28/24, p. 880.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

February 28, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Senate:

I am vetoing **Senate Bill 1014** in its entirety.

This bill would specify that the Department of Health Services must award grants to fund one or more health systems that specifically commit to providing hospital emergency department services in Chippewa County or Eau Claire County and agree to use any grant funds specifically for capital expenditures to aid in providing hospital emergency department services in Chippewa County or Eau Claire County. In addition, the bill would specify that the Department of Health Services must prioritize grant awards to support hospital emergency department services in Chippewa County. Finally, the bill would require: (1) health systems receiving grants to report to the Department of Health Services the amount of funding received, a detailed description of all capital expenditures for which the funding was used, and the impact of the funding on the hospital emergency department services; and (2) the Department of Health Services to report to the Legislature a summary of this information.

I am concurrently approving with improvements Senate Bill 1015, ensuring \$15,000,000 will be available to meet healthcare access needs for Western Wisconsin with the flexibility necessary to address urgent healthcare access needs that well exceed hospital emergency departments. These partial vetoes will broaden the scope of the grants, allowing the Department of Health Services to submit a plan for funding any hospital services meeting the area's pressing healthcare access needs. These crisis resources, due to my partial vetoes, will now also be available to

support urgent care services, OB-GYN services, inpatient psychiatric services, and mental health and substance abuse services in the Chippewa Valley.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to unnecessarily restricting crisis funding intended to address urgent healthcare access needs in Western Wisconsin. The Hospital Sisters Health System's (HSHS) recent closure announcement will result in a disruption of care for patients with ongoing needs, pregnant women, and those with mental health, behavioral health, and substance use disorders, among others. The state's response to this crisis must consider and be responsive to meeting the entire continuum of healthcare services that will be impacted in communities across the region, not just hospital emergency departments.

Under Senate Bill 1015, which I approved with partial vetoes today, \$15,000,000 in emergency resources are readily available and now have the flexibility necessary to meet the broader healthcare access needs of the Chippewa Valley region. The Department of Health Services has submitted an official request to the Joint Committee on Finance, asking the Committee to release these funds without delay. I urge the Joint Committee on Finance to work expeditiously to do so.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

IV. BILLS VETOED IN PART

2023 Wisconsin Act 97 (Senate Bill 1015): Transfer from the state building trust fund to the general fund and funding for grants to support hospital emergency department services

On February 20, 2024, the senate passed Senate Bill 1015 by a vote of 30 to 2, S.J. 2/20/24, p. 847.

On February 22, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 1015 by a vote of 97 to 0, A.J. 2/22/24, p. 770.

On February 28, 2024, the governor approved in part and vetoed in part Senate Bill 1015, and the part approved became 2023 Wisconsin Act 97, S.J. 2/28/24, p. 879. The date of enactment is February 28, 2024; the date of publication is February 29, 2024; and, as provided in section 991.11 of the Wisconsin Statutes, the effective date of all provisions of the act is March 1, 2024, except those provisions for which the act expressly provides a different date.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

February 28, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Senate:

I have approved **Senate Bill 1015** as 2023 Wisconsin Act 97 and have deposited it in the Office of the Secretary of State. I have exercised the partial veto in sections 1 [as it relates to s. 20.435 (1) (bd)], 2, and 4.

This bill would transfer \$15,000,000 SEG from the state building trust fund to the general fund for fiscal year 2023–24. In addition, the bill would eliminate a \$15,000,000 SEG appropriation for a Building Commission grant made during the 2021–22 fiscal year. Further, the bill would increase the supplemental appropriation to the Joint Committee on Finance by \$15,000,000 GPR for fiscal year 2023–24 to fund grants to support hospital emergency department services. Finally, the bill would create a Department of Health Services appropriation for hospital emergency department services grants.

I am partially vetoing sections 1 [as it relates to s. 20.435 (1) (bd)], 2, and 4 to remove the specific references to emergency department services within the broader category of hospital services. I object to unnecessarily restricting crisis funding intended to address urgent healthcare access needs in Western Wisconsin that exist well beyond hospital emergency departments.

The Hospital Sisters Health System’s (HSHS) closure will result in, for example, a disruption of care for patients with ongoing needs, pregnant women, and those with mental health, behavioral health, and substance use disorders, among others. The state’s response

to this crisis must consider and be responsive to meeting the entire continuum of healthcare services that will be impacted in communities across the region, not just hospital emergency departments. Through my broad, constitutional veto authority, I am ensuring these resources have the flexibility necessary to be used to meet healthcare access needs for Western Wisconsin. These partial vetoes will broaden the scope of the grants, allowing the Department of Health Services to submit a plan for funding any hospital services meeting the area’s pressing healthcare access needs. These crisis resources, due to my partial vetoes, will now also be available to support urgent care services, OB–GYN services, in–patient psychiatric services, and mental health and substance abuse services in the Chippewa Valley.

Under Senate Bill 1015, which I am approving with partial vetoes today, \$15,000,000 in emergency resources are readily available and now have the flexibility necessary to meet the broader healthcare access needs of the Chippewa Valley region. The Department of Health Services has submitted an official request to the Joint Committee on Finance, asking the Committee to release these funds without delay. I urge the Joint Committee on Finance to work expeditiously to do so.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Cited segments of 2023 Senate Bill 1015:

AN ACT to repeal 20.867 (3) (v); and to create 20.435 (1) (bd) of the statutes; relating to: transfer from the state building trust fund to the general fund, funding for grants to support hospital emergency department services, and making an appropriation.

**Vetoed
In Part**

SECTION 1. 20.005 (3) (schedule) of the statutes: at the appropriate place, insert the following amounts for the purposes indicated:

		2023-24	2024-25			
20.435 Health services, department of						
(1) PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES PLANNING, REGULATION, AND DELIVERY						
	(bd) Hospital emergency department services grants	GPR	B	-0-	-0-	Vetoed In Part

SECTION 2. 20.435 (1) (bd) of the statutes is created to read:

20.435 (1) (bd) *Hospital emergency department services grants*. Biennially, the amounts in the schedule for grants to support hospital **emergency department** services.

(2) JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE SUPPLEMENTATION. In the schedule under s. 20.005 (3) for the appropriation to the joint committee on finance under s. 20.865 (4) (a), the dollar amount for fiscal year 2023-24 is increased by \$15,000,000 for grants to support hospital **emergency department** services.

SECTION 4. Fiscal changes.

**Vetoed
In Part**

**Vetoed
In Part**

**Vetoed
In Part**

2023 Wisconsin Act 100 (Senate Bill 971): Appropriations for Act 20

On February 13, 2024, the senate adopted Senate Amendment 2 to Senate Bill 971 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 810, and passed Senate Bill 971, as amended, on a voice vote, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 810.

On February 20, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 971 on a voice vote, A.J. 2/20/24, p. 739.

On February 29, 2024, the governor approved in part and vetoed in part Senate Bill 971, and the part approved became 2023 Wisconsin Act 100, S.J. 2/29/24, p. 882. The date of enactment is February 29, 2024; the date of publication is March 1, 2024; and, as provided in section 991.11 of the Wisconsin Statutes, the effective date of all provisions of the act is March 2, 2024, except those provisions for which the act expressly provides a different date.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

February 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Senate:

I have approved **Senate Bill 971** as 2023 Wisconsin Act 100 and have deposited it in the Office of the Secretary of State. I have exercised the partial veto with respect to sections 1 [as it relates to s. 20.255 (1) (fc) and s. 20.255 (2) (fc)], 2, 3, 4, and 5.

This bill would create two appropriations to fund the requirements imposed by 2023 Wisconsin Act 20, which created an Office of Literacy in the Department of Public Instruction that administers a literacy coaching program and early literacy grants. The bill also specifies that the director of the Office of Literacy is assigned to executive salary group three and would set a repeal date of July 1, 2028, with respect to the literacy coaching program appropriation.

I have exercised the partial veto with respect to sections 1 [as it relates to s. 20.255 (1) (fc)] and 2 to remove reference to “coaching” and the related literacy coaching statutory reference, in order to consolidate support for the office and all literacy program initiatives in one appropriation under s. 20.255 (1) (fc). I have exercised the partial veto with respect to section 1 [as it relates to s. 20.255 (2) (fc)] and section 4 to eliminate the creation of s. 20.255

(2) (fc). I have further exercised the partial veto with respect to sections 3 and 5 to remove the July 1, 2028, repeal of s. 20.255 (1) (fc).

Ensuring our kids have the reading and literacy tools and skills to be successful both in and out of the classroom is critically important, as is improving reading and literacy outcomes for kids across our state. I am partially vetoing this bill because I object to overly complicating the allocation of funding related to literacy programs in Wisconsin by creating multiple appropriations for what could be accomplished with one. By consolidating funding into one appropriation, the department will have the flexibility necessary to utilize the appropriate amount of funding for various literacy needs based on the needs of Wisconsin schools. The department would not be able to do so with funding divided between multiple appropriations. Promoting early literacy and learning is critical for future academic achievement, and flexibility is crucial to meet investment needs for coaches, grants, and professional development alike. Consolidating funding into a single continuing appropriation will support this important goal and simplify the administration of funding for the department.

Further, the proposed appropriation structure under the bill does not align with the expected implementation timeline for early literacy interventions under Act 20. Furthermore, removing the July 1, 2028, repeal of the appropriation will create flexibility to invest in literacy programs for as long as the state has funding available and as long as decision makers invest in improving reading instruction in Wisconsin, and I object to potentially prematurely ending this investment.

Further, I object to signing a bill with an apparent error that benefits only private choice schools and independent charter schools. Private choice schools and independent charter schools are eligible for grants to purchase approved early literacy curriculum, and independent charter schools are eligible for funding to support the mandatory early reading instruction professional development. As drafted, either intentionally or inadvertently, these entities could also receive an increase in per pupil funding because the bill does not contain standard provisions to exclude the newly created categorical appropriation from the indexing formula used to increase per pupil

payments for private choice, independent charter, Special Needs Scholarship, and open enrollment students. Consequently, a private choice or independent charter school could receive both a grant for curriculum and an ongoing increase in per pupil funding. Contrastingly, no such funding increase would be provided to public school districts under the bill.

The single appropriation created through my partial veto will allow the department to administer the literacy coaching program, curriculum grants, and financial assistance for early literacy professional development effectively and efficiently. I am hopeful that the department and the Joint Committee on Finance will work quickly to release funding from the committee's supplemental appropriation to support the important work of improving reading and literacy outcomes for our kids.

Respectfully submitted,

TONY EVERS

Governor

Cited segments of 2023 Senate Bill 971:

AN ACT to repeal 20.255 (1) (fc); and to create 20.255 (1) (fc), 20.255 (2) (fc) and 20.923 (4) (c) 6m. of the statutes; relating to: early literacy programs administered by the Department of Public Instruction.

**Vetoed
In Part**

SECTION 1. 20.005 (3) (schedule) of the statutes: at the appropriate place, insert the following amounts for the purposes indicated:

			2023-24	2024-25	
20.255 Public instruction, department of					
(1) EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP					
(fc) Office of literacy; literacy coaching program	GPR	C	-0-	-0-	Vetoed In Part
(2) AIDS FOR LOCAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING					
(fc) Early literacy initiatives; support	GPR	B	-0-	-0-	Vetoed In Part

SECTION 2. 20.255 (1) (fc) of the statutes is created to read:

20.255 (1) (fc) *Office of literacy; literacy coaching program.* As a continuing appropriation, the amounts in the schedule for the office of literacy and the literacy coaching program under s. 115.39 .

SECTION 3. 20.255 (1) (fc) of the statutes, as created by 2023 Wisconsin Act (this act), is repealed.

SECTION 4. 20.255 (2) (fc) of the statutes is created to read:

20.255 (2) (fc) *Early literacy initiatives; support.* Biennially, the amounts in the schedule for grants under s. 118.015 (1m) (c) and for financial assistance paid to school boards and charter schools for compliance with 2023 Wisconsin Act 20, section 27 (2) (a).

SECTION 5. Effective dates. This act takes effect on the day after publication, except as follows:

(1) The repeal of s. 20.255 (1) (fc) takes effect on July 1, 2028.

**Vetoed
In Part**

**Vetoed
In Part**

**Vetoed
In Part**

**Vetoed
In Part**

**Vetoed
In Part**

2023 Wisconsin Act 250 (Senate Bill 518): University of Wisconsin System branch campus redevelopment grants

On February 13, 2024, the senate adopted Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 518 on a voice vote, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 802, and passed Senate Bill 518, as amended, by a vote of 27 to 5, S.J. 2/13/24, p. 802.

On February 20, 2024, the assembly concurred in Senate Bill 518 by a vote of 96 to 2, A.J. 2/20/24, p. 724.

On March 29, 2024, the governor approved in part and vetoed in part Senate Bill 518, and the part approved became 2023 Wisconsin Act 250, S.J. 3/29/24, p. 942. The date of enactment is March 29, 2024; the date of publication is March 30, 2024; and, as provided in section 991.11 of the Wisconsin Statutes, the effective date of all provisions of the act is March 31, 2024, except those provisions for which the act expressly provides a different date.

TEXT OF GOVERNOR’S VETO MESSAGE

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable Members of 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

Cited segments of 2023 Senate Bill 518:

SECTION 3. 238.145 of the statutes is created to read:

238.145 Branch campus redevelopment grants.

(2) GRANTS. (a) From the appropriation under s. 20.192 (1) (c), and subject to pars. (b) to (f), the corporation shall award grants to political subdivisions for costs, including planning costs and demolition costs, associated with the redevelopment of buildings or other sites owned by the political subdivision on a branch campus or former branch campus that are or will no longer be used for academic purposes .

(c)

2. The political subdivision provides matching funding from local sources in an amount of at least 20 percent of the amount of the grant awarded .

(e) The corporation shall award a grant under this subsection to Richland County before awarding a grant under this subsection to any other political subdivision . After the grant to Richland County is awarded, the corpo-

ration shall award grants to Fond du Lac County, Washington County, and Marinette County before awarding a grant under this subsection to any other political subdivision . This paragraph applies to a county only if the county satisfies all requirements under this subsection for the award of a grant.

(f) Upon receiving a political subdivision's application for a grant under this subsection, the corporation shall request under s. 13.101 (3) that the joint committee on finance supplement the appropriation under s. 20.192 (1) (c) by the grant amount if the corporation determines that the requirements under this subsection for awarding the grant are satisfied. The corporation shall submit a separate request to the joint committee on finance for each grant to be awarded. The joint committee on finance may supplement the appropriation under s. 20.192 (1) (c) without finding that an emergency exists under s. 13.101 (3) (a) 1.

Vetoed
In Part

Vetoed
In Part
Vetoed
In Part

Vetoed
In Part

Vetoed
In Part

Vetoed
In Part