

Mount Horeb Veterans Memorial Added to State Highway Maps

Written by GOV Press Wisconsin
Friday, 05 April 2024 13:24 -



Action builds on the work of the Evers Administration to provide support and recognition to Wisconsin's veteran community.

MOUNT HOREB — Gov. Tony Evers today signed Assembly Bill 558, now 2023 Wisconsin Act 270, which adds the Mount Horeb Veterans Memorial to state highway maps. With the enactment of Act 270, the memorial will join 16 other veterans' sites that are statutorily included on Wisconsin's official state highway map. The governor was joined for the signing by bill authors Senator Dianne Hesselbein (D-Middleton) and Representative Mike Bare (D-Verona), local officials, and community members.



“Across our state, local community and veteran organizations work to develop and establish locations like the Mount Horeb Veterans Memorial to recognize and honor our nation’s heroes. Adding this memorial to our state highway maps will make sure folks from across our state and beyond can visit the memorial and pay respects to the service and sacrifices of our veterans,” said Gov. Evers. “I want to thank the Mount Horeb VFW, American Legion, and Vietnam Veterans Chapter for their work supporting this effort, and I look forward to continuing to work with all our local partners to bolster our efforts to recognize, thank, and support Wisconsin’s more than 300,000 veterans.”

In 2018, the Mount Horeb VFW Post 9511, Mount Horeb American Legion Post 113, and Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans Chapter IV formed the Mount Horeb Veterans Memorial Association to establish, plan, and construct the Mount Horeb Veterans Memorial, which opened to the public in May 2021. According to the Mount Horeb Veterans Memorial Association, the memorial honors five branches of the U.S. military—Army, Navy, Marine

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Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard—through various design features, including 10 flags circling the Freedom Tower, black granite pillars representing each branch, and more than 400 pavers inscribed with the names of over 600 veterans.

This action builds on the work of the Evers Administration to provide support and recognition to Wisconsin's veteran community. Most recently, Gov. Evers [signed](#) four bills, 2023 Wisconsin Acts 203, 204, 205, and 206, that provide additional resources for Wisconsin veterans and their families.

Act 203, which Gov. Evers signed in March, makes it easier for county veterans service offices to receive veterans service office grants by removing the requirement that counties only hire veterans service officers who have taken a civil service examination or have been appointed under a civil service competitive examination procedure. Under Act 203, the county veterans service officer must simply be a Wisconsin resident who served on active duty under honorable conditions in the U.S. Armed Forces and meet certain other conditions, allowing county veterans service offices to help more veterans connect to benefits, preventative programming, and mental health resources across the state.

Act 204 allows spouses of veterans to become members of the state veterans' homes even if their veteran spouse is not a member. This bill will ensure that healthy veterans are not seeking admission to a skilled nursing home before they need that level of care while also ensuring their spouse also receives the care they need.

Act 205 adds to the definition of "veteran" any person who was admitted to the United States under the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act for the purposes of indicating veteran status on a driver's license or identification card.

Finally, Act 206 makes changes to the hiring process for positions that provide direct care to residents at veterans homes, removes the Wisconsin residency eligibility requirements in determining whether an individual or their spouse or children may be buried in a state veterans cemetery, and modifies the elements of sexual assault under the Wisconsin Code of Military Justice to align with the elements of the offense under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, among other provisions.

Outside of legislation, the Evers Administration is committed to ensuring Wisconsin veterans have the tools and resources they need to thrive in their civilian lives. In 2022, Gov. Evers [sig](#)
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an executive order creating a Blue Ribbon Commission on Veteran Opportunity to develop new, innovative initiatives to support the more than 300,000 veterans who live in Wisconsin. Based on the Commission's recommendations, Gov. Evers [announced](#)

a \$10 million investment, funded through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), in veteran services across the state. These services included investments to support veterans' mental health initiatives, a new rental assistance program for homeless veterans, and additional resources for the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs' (DVA) Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program (VORP), veteran services offices, and more.

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The governor's directed investments enabled VORP to expand from 12 to 16 regions, ensuring the program could connect more veterans with housing, employment, and mental health services, among other critical services. In 2023, those working under VORP enrolled 473 veterans in the program, made 5,460 contacts with veterans seeking assistance across the state, and conducted 8,745 hours of case management services. Gov. Evers and DVA also directed part of Gov. Evers' \$10 million ARPA investment toward a new Veterans Rental Assistance Program, which provided more than \$2 million in assistance to 566 veteran households to address housing insecurity and homelessness in 2023.

Additionally, part of Gov. Evers' \$10 million ARPA investment went toward bolstering support for the mental health of Wisconsin's veterans. Last year, Gov. Evers and DVA Secretary James Bond [launched](#) the Veteran Mental Health Community-Based Organization Grant program and [announced](#) nearly \$650,000 in grants to 16 nonprofit organizations to promote positive mental health through activities, programs, and services that enhance the emotional, psychological, and social well-being of Wisconsin veterans. In September, Gov. Evers also [announced](#) two additional veteran mental health grants for mental health providers to serve veterans with crisis or emergency mental health needs and for licensed providers to administer mental health services to veterans. In November, DVA [announced](#) \$474,407 in grants to seven organizations for the first round of the two grant programs to directly subsidize mental healthcare for Wisconsin veterans.

Gov. Evers' 2023-25 executive budget built upon the investments recommended by the Commission, providing ongoing state support for these critical initiatives. While a majority of these provisions were removed by Republicans in the Wisconsin State Legislature, the final 2023-25 budget signed by Gov. Evers still increased funding by 25 percent for county veterans service offices and Tribal veterans service offices and provided \$2.5 million annually to support the state's veterans homes, as needed, to ensure these vital facilities can retain staff, address building and operational needs, and provide top-quality care to veterans.

Finally, during his 2024 State of the State address, Gov. Evers declared 2024 the Year of the Worker and announced Wisconsin's workforce development services [now rank 4th in the country](#) for successfully helping veterans find employment. The new ranking underscores Wisconsin's deep commitment to connecting veterans to jobs employers are seeking to fill. In the program year that ended June 2023, the U.S. Department of Labor standard showed that 67.9 percent of the state's veteran program participants who were unemployed became employed with help from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development's Office of Veteran Employment Services. Last year, 58.7 percent of participants received the help they needed to gain employment.

To learn more about resources and services available to veterans and their families in Wisconsin, visit the DVA website [here](#).

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[Assembly Bill 558](#) , now 2023 Wisconsin Act 270:

- Requires the identification of the Mount Horeb Veterans Memorial on state highway maps.