Evers Vetoes Republican Efforts to Curtail Voting
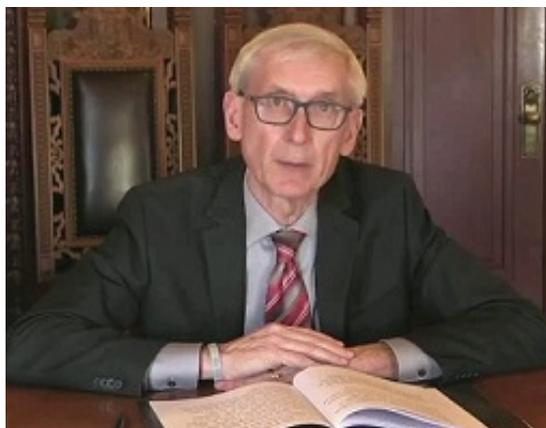
Written by GOV Press Wisconsin
Tuesday, 10 August 2021 15:05

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Governor vetoes GOP bills that reflect national effort to damage democracy.

MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today vetoed legislation passed by Republicans in the Legislature that would affect election administration in the state of Wisconsin. These bills come as Republican-controlled states and legislatures across the country are taking up similar or related measures to add more hurdles to voting, discredit the work of election officials, and try and cast doubt on the results of the 2020 presidential election. In a public ceremony today, the governor vetoed Senate Bills 203, 204, 205, 210, 212, and 292, in addition to Assembly Bill 173   which was sent to the governor earlier this summer. A live stream of the event is available here
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"Since November 2020, we've watched Republican governors and legislators around the country work quickly to add more hurdles to voting, to discredit the good work of our election officials, and to try and cast doubt on an election just because they didn't win," said Gov. Evers.

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"They're trying to stack the deck so they get the results they want next time, and they're trying to make it harder for every eligible person to cast their ballot.

"Democracy isn't something that just happens for us, we choose to make it every day. When I ran for this office, I promised that I'd work to protect the right of every eligible person to vote. That's why we will keep working to protect the right of every eligible voter to cast their ballot and to make sure it is easy and accessible for them to do so, and that's why I vetoed these bills today."

The bills vetoed today include several provisions that would make it more difficult for voters to cast their ballots and for local officials to administer elections, including:

-   Limiting how a municipality can conduct an event in the community designed to help citizens return absentee ballots;
-   Restricting who can return a ballot on behalf of a voter;
-   Restricting the use of indefinitely confined status when applying for an absentee ballot;
-   Eliminating certain exemptions for voter identification requirements when voting absentee;

-   Making it a felony to incorrectly attest that a person is indefinitely confined;
-   Modifies how voting at qualified nursing homes and residential facilities is conducted, including shortening the window in which special voting deputies and assistants can help residents exercise their right to vote;
-   Requires family members of a resident voter to be notified of when the voting will take place with or without the voter's input;
-   Creates a new designation of "absentee voting assistant" so that employees of the homes or facilities can provide voting assistance, but makes it a felony for an employee to coerce a resident to take or not take an action in regard to voting;
-   Decreases the distance of election observers from tables to no more than three feet only for recount activities;
-   Prohibiting clerks from helping correct minor errors on returned absentee ballots, such as adding the zip code;
-   Requires clerks to notify a voter of a defect with their ballot online and does not require they use other means to notify a voter, which could result in a voter being unaware their ballot had a defect; and
-   Requires municipalities that live stream or broadcast election night proceedings to retain a copy of the entire broadcast for 22 months.

The governor's veto messages are available below.

Veto message for Senate Bill 203 .

Veto message for Senate Bill 204 .

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Veto message for Senate Bill 205 .

Veto message for Senate Bill 210 .

Veto message for Senate Bill 212 .

Veto message for Senate Bill 292 .