



# Tony Evers

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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February 28, 2020

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY:

I am vetoing 2019 Assembly Bill 805 in its entirety.

This bill requires that the Department of Corrections recommend revoking a person's extended supervision, parole, or probation if the person is charged with a crime while on extended supervision, parole, or probation. Individuals who are participating in the alternatives to revocation program at the Department of Corrections are exempt from the sanctions of this bill.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to this unfunded mandate on the Department of Corrections that moves Wisconsin in the wrong direction on criminal justice reform. This bill is estimated to have a fiscal impact of more than \$200 million in just the first two years and hundreds of millions of dollars in unknown, ongoing costs to state taxpayers in the years to follow. This significant price tag does not include construction costs to build additional state correctional facilities, which would likely be needed, or take into account the fiscal impact on local governments.

Investing in evidence-based programming that addresses barriers to reentry, enhances educational and vocational opportunities for returning citizens, and provides treatment for mental health and substance use issues has shown to be an effective way to reduce recidivism and save taxpayer money while improving public safety. My budget made strides by investing in the Opening Avenues to Reentry Success and Treatment, Alternatives, and Diversion programs. My budget also proposed a two-percent increase in shared revenues for our local governments that would have helped them manage public safety costs. Sadly, this funding increase for local governments was removed by the legislature.

Research also indicates that early childhood education and after school programs have been shown to reduce crime and improve outcomes for kids. I would support additional investments in evidence-based programming, our public schools, and our local governments as an effective way to improve public safety and strengthen our communities. I welcome a conversation with legislators about these investments and hope to see broad, bipartisan support for these commonsense ideas.

Leaders at the federal level and in states like Pennsylvania, Mississippi, and Texas have been able to enact meaningful and bipartisan criminal justice reform through policies that focus on rehabilitation and reduce incarceration, particularly the over-incarceration of poor people and people of color. A massive and costly expansion of our prison system would take Wisconsin down the wrong path.

I also object to removing the discretion of the Department of Corrections to recommend whether to revoke an individual's extended supervision, parole, or probation and to the lack of due process the bill provides. Even if the new charges against the individual are dismissed or the person is found not guilty, the person could still have his or her extended supervision, probation, or parole revoked.

The provisions included in 2019 Assembly Bill 805 revert to antiquated policies which resulted in mass incarceration. I will not move Wisconsin in the wrong direction on criminal justice reform and public safety.

Respectfully submitted,

Tony Evers  
Governor