



Tony Evers

Office of the Governor | State of Wisconsin

April 1, 2020

Dear Majority Leader Fitzgerald, Minority Leader Shilling, Speaker Vos, and Minority Leader Hintz:

I have appreciated the opportunity over the past weeks to engage in discussions with you regarding our state's response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. As you know, time is of the essence and it is critical that the Legislature take up comprehensive legislation to provide needed relief as soon as possible.

While the federal government's response is welcome and necessary, there are many items that require the state legislature to act, including suspension of specific statutory provisions and providing state funding to fill gaps in the federal response. My office previously provided you with an initial draft of a response package in the hopes that the Legislature would convene in March to address the immediate issues that our state is facing.

During the weeks since my team initially began drafting those provisions, additional needs have come to our attention. As such, I believe that the legislation that we negotiate should also include the following items. My office has been in touch with the Legislative Reference Bureau and we will provide drafts for these provisions as soon as they are available. I will also continue to share legislative solutions as issues arise from agencies and stakeholders in our continued fight to stop the spread of COVID-19 in Wisconsin.

I look forward to the opportunity to hear and consider any proposals that you or your members have to address the effects of COVID-19 on the health and wellbeing of Wisconsin residents, businesses and communities. Please provide your proposals as soon as possible so that we are able to work together to swiftly address the growing needs of our state.

Thank you for your consideration of these proposals. I look forward to finding a path forward to address these critical issues facing the people we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Tony Evers'.

Tony Evers
Governor

HEALTH SERVICES

<p>BILL PROVISION: Increase funding for Medicaid providers via supplemental payments and rate increases to support the healthcare system’s response to the PHE.</p> <p>Fiscal: Approximately \$94 million GPR; \$274 million AF.</p>	
Issue	In addition to supporting the efforts to respond to COVID-19, the economic disruption caused by the PHE places additional stress on the healthcare system, disrupting the healthcare workforce and increasing enrollment in the state’s Medicaid program.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The additional funding will be distributed to the following providers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Institutional Care (FFS NH, Hospice): \$9.8 M GPR / \$28.6 M AF ○ Home Care (FFS Personal Care): \$3.9 M GPR / \$11.5 M AF ○ Managed LTC (FC, PACE): \$39.9 M GPR / \$116 M AF ○ HCBS (CLTS, IRIS): \$14.9 M GPR / \$43 M AF ○ Hospitals: \$25.8 M / \$75 M AF • Cost to continue for healthcare providers has increased dramatically as a result of the direct and indirect ramifications associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional funding is necessary to maintain capacity and quality of care for individuals seeking care via these types of healthcare providers. • Overtime costs for staff, adding staff, new procedures and sanitation protocol, staff compensation during staffing shortages, as well as disruption to standard delivery of care as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency have placed healthcare providers, across the board, in difficult financial positions.

<p>BILL PROVISION: Establish a fund to reduce providers’ uncompensated care costs targeting reimbursement for treatment-related costs for uninsured individuals.</p> <p>Fiscal: \$10 million GPR.</p>	
Issue	Recently enacted federal legislation establishes a fund to assist healthcare providers by providing payments for uncompensated care related to testing, screening, and the eventual vaccination of individuals that have contracted COVID-19. The federal legislation does not provide relief to providers for uncompensated care related to the treatment of COVID-19.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first bill proposed by Gov. Evers (LRB 5920/P2) would require insurers to cover testing, diagnosis, treatment, and any vaccinations or prescription medicines to prevent or treat COVID-19. • Recently enacted federal legislation provides financial assistance to providers who incur uncompensated care costs related to providing certain COVID-19 services to individuals who are uninsured. There are gaps in this legislation as it would not cover assistance to providers for the uncompensated cost of treatment. • This provision establishes a fund that will operate as the payer of last resort for uncompensated care costs incurred by Wisconsin providers for testing, treatment, and vaccinations for COVID-19, filling the gap in assistance created by the federal bill. • As the state of Wisconsin seeks to flatten the curve and prevent our healthcare system from becoming overwhelmed by the PHE, it is in the state’s interest to ensure that

	uncompensated costs associated with treating COVID-19 do not harm our collective ability to respond to the pandemic.
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BILL PROVISION: Provide grant funding to support emergency food bank operations. Fiscal: \$10 million over biennium.	
Issue	The PHE and its associated adverse economic effects, as well as the disruption to standard nutritional assistance and food bank operations, heighten food insecurity in our state.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizations report that food insecure individuals are six times more likely to have chronic health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and hypertension and are at a greater risk for being severely affected if they contract coronavirus. Minimizing their need to leave their homes allows Wisconsin to ensure basic needs are met while following the guidelines established by DHS and the CDC.

BILL PROVISION: Provide grant funding to support meal delivery programs and public-private partnerships (administered by DOA). Fiscal: \$10 million over biennium.	
Issue	The PHE has resulted in the closure of schools, ADRCs, senior centers, and other facilities that provide congregate meals. Additionally, restaurants have reduced operations due to the PHE.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These settings often provide meals to children, aging adults, and families that are vulnerable to food insecurity. This program creatively connects and supports public-private partnerships between these entities and local Wisconsin restaurants by supporting the meal programs that many Wisconsinites rely on while also bolstering small businesses that are particularly adversely impacted by the PHE.

BILL PROVISION: Expand the WisCaregiver program. Fiscal: Approximately \$6.4 million GPR; \$12.8 million AF.	
Issue	Wisconsin's nursing homes and long-term care are experiencing a workforce crisis. This crisis is intensified by the effects of COVID-19, both as it relates to additional precautions necessary to keep residents safe as well as the disruption the disease causes to the number of available direct care workers.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In an effort to attract and retain more nursing home caregivers, the DHS launched the WisCaregiver Career Program. The goals of the program are to: 1) increase the number of nurse aides available to work in Wisconsin nursing homes, and 2) inform the public about the benefits of working in our state's nursing homes and the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of Wisconsin's elders and individuals with disabilities. The program provides free training and testing for students to become caregivers in Wisconsin nursing homes. Nurse aides will also receive a \$500 retention bonus from participating nursing homes after six months on the job. Boosting funding for this program will accelerate the training of CNAs to serve in Wisconsin's long-term care facilities.

BILL PROVISION: Authorize Wisconsin's SeniorCare program to cover all vaccinations.	
Fiscal: No additional appropriation.	
Issue	Aging adults are particularly at risk of developing serious illness and requiring hospitalization as a result of COVID-19. Any developed vaccine or vaccines should be covered by SeniorCare.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SeniorCare is a prescription drug assistance program for Wisconsin residents who are 65 years of age or older and meet the enrollment requirements. The program is designed to help seniors with their prescription drug costs. • SeniorCare provides coverage for most medically necessary prescription medicines, however gaps still remain, particularly in the coverage of certain vaccinations. • Should a vaccine be developed for COVID-19, it's critical that aging adults, who are particularly at-risk of serious illness or death as a result of a COVID-19 infection, have access to all available prescription medicines designed to treat or prevent the disease.

BILL PROVISION: Provide an exemption from certain statutory provisions regarding total number of hospital beds and out-of-state ambulance service transfers during a public health emergency.	
Fiscal: No appropriation.	
Issue	In order to prepare for and respond to any surge in COVID-19 cases, the state may need flexibility to temporarily exceed the number of hospital beds or hospitals may need flexibility to transfer beds to associated facilities.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During a PHE, we should ensure that the state is able to utilize beds as necessary to provide appropriate care to Wisconsinites (Wis. Stat. s. 150.93(1) and (4)). • Similarly, during a PHE, we should not limit to 10 the number of transfers an out-of-state ambulance service provider licensed in another state is able to do within the State of Wisconsin to ensure sufficient capacity to respond to Wisconsinites in need of service. (Wis. Stat. s. 256.15(2)(b))

INSURANCE

BILL PROVISION: Target excess funds from the Wisconsin Health Insurance Stability Plan (WHISP) to defray costs associated with covering COVID-19-related services and reduce health insurance premiums.	
Fiscal: Approximately \$30 million GPR over biennium.	
Issue	The first bill proposed by Gov. Evers (LRB 5920/P2) in response to the PHE included provisions assigning coverage and cost-sharing requirements for treatment related to COVID-19. Excess funds available from the WHISP program allows for the implementation of a program to reduce the cost of insurance for consumers by mitigating the risk insurers taken on associated with COVID-19.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insurers offering coverage in Wisconsin's individual market will factor in the potential high costs associated with testing and treatment of COVID-19 when developing 2021 premiums.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recent study found that insurers could increase premium costs from 4 to 40% for 2021. • By repurposing these otherwise unspent funds, the State can help offset the anticipated high costs associated with COVID-19 and reduce potentially devastating premium increases on Wisconsinites who purchase their health insurance on the individual market. • This provision will also provide OCI with authority to adjust the reinsurance program to maximize its effectiveness and take advantage of any federal funding opportunities.
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BILL PROVISION: Grants to Covering Wisconsin to support health insurance literacy and private and individual market enrollment.
Fiscal: Approximately \$1.1 million GPR.

Issue	As Wisconsinites cope with the economic effects associated with the COVID-19 PHE, and as record reports of unemployment continue, additional infrastructure is needed to help Wisconsinites enroll in an appropriate insurance program.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This bill provides funding to the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance to provide grants to the organization known as Covering Wisconsin to assist individuals with health insurance literacy and enrollment. • Due to the economic effects of the PHE and record number of unemployment claims, individuals who previously relied on their employment for health insurance will likely need to navigate the health insurance options available on the private market. • When an individual loses employer-based health insurance, they are eligible to purchase health insurance on the individual market (through an insurance agent or on HealthCare.gov) during a 60-day special enrollment period. • This program is critical to ensure that individuals whose coverage is interrupted are able to quickly obtain or enroll in available insurance programs. • A lack of health insurance poses a financial and health risk not only to the uninsured individual, but to our communities and healthcare systems as a whole as we collectively work to mitigate COVID-19.

SAFETY & PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

BILL PROVISION: Convert 21.0 LTE to FTE PR for position authority related to medical licensure.
Fiscal: No appropriation.

Issue	Health care provider demand will remain high during the PHE.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gov. Evers issued Emergency Order #16, which expedited the expansion and enhanced the efficiency of the healthcare workforce. • As a result of an anticipated increase in the number of retired and out-of-state healthcare providers, as well as the redeployment of many currently licensed healthcare providers and the anticipated increase in services provided, increased position authority is needed to quickly process applications and investigate any issues that arise.

ADMINISTRATION

<p>BILL PROVISION: Authority to waive interest, penalties or payments on governmental loans and debt during the PHE.</p> <p>Fiscal: No appropriation.</p>	
Issue	Given the unprecedented economic disruption created by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important that state and local officials have the ability to waive interest, penalties and payments on loans during the duration of this crisis.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This provision is consistent with the recommendation that the appropriate agency head be allowed to waive in-person requirements and deadlines or specific statutory timelines that occur during the public health emergency. • It is also consistent with Gov. Evers' Emergency Order #15 to put a moratorium on evictions and on expansions of unemployment assistance and many other provisions which are designed to help cushion the economic blow that many Wisconsin residents are currently facing. • It would not apply to debt service payments that are required to be made at the state or local level.

<p>BILL PROVISION: Allow households to apply for heating assistance under the low-income energy assistance program anytime during the 2020 calendar year.</p> <p>Fiscal: No appropriation.</p>	
Issue	Current state statute allows regular heating assistance applications to be taken between October 1 st and May 15 th .
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program was included in the federal CARES Act. • Provides both households and the department with the flexibility to submit and accept home energy assistance applications anytime during the calendar year. • With the widespread negative economic impact and job losses caused by the PHE, it is plausible that there will be additional heating assistance applications processed by the department. • Lifting the deadline will provide both applicants and the department with more time to submit and process applications in advance of colder fall and winter temperatures.

<p>BILL PROVISION: Create a grant program administered by DOA for the purpose of providing hazard pay to critical workers and first responders.</p> <p>Fiscal: Federal funds.</p>	
Issue	Critical workers and first responders who continue working do so at a risk to themselves and their families.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This provision will help ensure that critical workers and first responders, who are often not highly compensated, continue to provide critical services. • Critical workers include an employee, contractor, or other staff person working in critical infrastructure or in a vital sector, as identified by the Department of Administration.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First responders include an employee of or volunteer for an agency that provides firefighting, law enforcement, medical, or other emergency services.
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<p>BILL PROVISION: Provide one-time relief of up to \$100 million in general fund supported borrowing in the event the state temporarily suspends construction projects during the PHE.</p> <p>Fiscal: \$100 million GFSB.</p>	
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Issue	The state may have to close buildings or jobsites for public or members' safety during the PHE which may result in higher than anticipated capital costs.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows the building commission to authorize up to \$100 million in general fund supported borrowing in fiscal year 2019-20 for expenditures to cover increased capital costs, as determined by the building commission, incurred due to interruptions of work under the authorized state building program as a result of the PHE.

CORRECTIONS

<p>BILL PROVISION: Create a PHE fund for DOC to use for increased costs due to overtime as a result of the PHE.</p> <p>Fiscal: \$8.7 million GPR.</p>	
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Issue	The Department of Corrections faces unique challenges related to the PHE.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So far, employees at three correctional institutions have tested positive for COVID-19. As additional employees test positive, healthy employees may need to work overtime to keep our institutions safe. • This is especially critical given the staff shortages the DOC has had in recent years. • DOC has calculated the cost of overtime as \$2.1 million per pay period, assuming that 20% of vital institution personnel are out at any given time. This provision assumes the PHE lasts four pay periods. • In order to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in correctional institutions, DOC is also providing paid leave to LTE correctional officers and institutional medical personnel at an estimated cost of \$472,400.

CHILDREN & FAMILIES

<p>BILL PROVISION: DCF program (child welfare, child care and child support) procedural flexibility during a PHE.</p> <p>Fiscal: No appropriation.</p>	
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Issue	Child welfare, child care, and child support functions may need flexibility as they continue to operate during the PHE.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child welfare functions are essential to protecting the safety of children who have experienced or who are at risk of maltreatment. • While certain DCF functions must continue during the PHE, there are specific statutory provisions which will be difficult to meet as a result of the pandemic. • This provision provides flexibility in administering these programs in order to ensure they can continue to function effectively in an unprecedented situation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For example, DCF would be allowed to provide the child welfare intake function for a county that does not have sufficient worker capacity. • Additionally, DCF would be able to waive license renewal requirements for child care providers.
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BILL PROVISION: Provide supplemental payments to child care providers if that provider needed to shut down during the PHE.	
Fiscal: Funded from the already proposed \$25 million GPR appropriation in LRB 5920/P2.	
Issue	Child care providers that close during the PHE are at risk of going out of business if they do not continue to receive tuition dollars.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps lower the risk of reduced access to child care post-PHE. • Incentivizes providers to not charge parents tuition during the PHE if the provider is closed, reducing the financial burden on parents.

BILL PROVISION: Reallocate internal DCF funding for congregate care facilities and older youth programs.	
Fiscal: \$3.7 million GPR (reallocated internally).	
Issue	Throughout the PHE, services that care for children will experience strain.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCF has identified \$3.7 million GPR of underspending that can be reallocated to assist during the COVID-19 outbreak. • This proposal would provide \$2.9 million to create a fund that would allow congregate care facilities to draw from in order to address workforce shortages to keep the facilities operational during the COVID-19 PHE. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Congregate care facilities will need additional funding for supplies, additional technology needs for non-face-to-face visits and education, and additional workforce demands. The least administratively burdensome way to accommodate these increased financial pressures is to create a pool of funding that these facilities can apply for funding to reimburse their extra expenditures. • This proposal would provide \$309,500 for older youth programs, which represents a 10% increase to the current contracts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Older youth, whether they are runaway, homeless, or in independent living, are vulnerable to spreading the virus. With increased funding, services can be provided to this population and contain the spread of COVID-19.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

BILL PROVISION: Reimburse all claims paid from UI trust fund related to the PHE.	
Fiscal: GPR-backed sum sufficient funding.	
Issue	High levels of unemployment applications are happening and will continue to happen as a result of the PHE.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applies to both claims for unemployment benefits and work-share plans.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, states must “relieve benefit charges for claimants and employers directly impacted by COVID-19 due to an illness in the workplace or direction from a public health official to isolate or quarantine workers” to receive federal matching for the first week of Extended Benefits and emergency administrative grants. • Although we are awaiting federal guidance, this provision will ensure that benefits during the PHE not otherwise federally funded will be paid by the state. • Instead of being charged/counted against employers' UI accounts, claims would be covered by GPR. • By funding unemployment benefits with GPR, the state will ensure that businesses do not experience a significant UI tax increase in the future as a result of layoffs that were not desired or of their own fault during the PHE.
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<p>BILL PROVISION: Allow critical workers, including healthcare workers, to claim worker’s compensation benefits related to COVID-19, presuming that they received the illness from their occupation.</p> <p>Fiscal: No appropriation.</p>	
Issue	Currently, communicable diseases generally are not compensable under worker’s compensation and compensation is limited to diseases that are the result of long-term exposure to a condition of employment.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical workers, as determined by DHS, are placing themselves in danger by continuing to engage with the public in various ways to maintain services, at the risk of contracting COVID-19 themselves. • As essential workers are in contact with the general frequently, a presumption of a work-related illness in their favor is appropriate.

<p>BILL PROVISION: Provide state-funded back payment for any lost benefits as a result of the delay in suspending the one-week waiting period.</p> <p>Fiscal: GPR-backed sum sufficient funding, if retroactive federal funds are not available.</p>	
Issue	The recently passed federal law fully finances benefits for the first week of unemployment, but only for states that suspend any one-week waiting period they have enacted.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is unclear at this time whether the \$600 add-on is precluded unless the state one-week waiting period is suspended. • If it is, back payments to address the loss of benefits related to delay in state legislation may be appropriate.

<p>BILL PROVISION: Allow employers to continue to partially pay laid-off employees without an effect on eligibility for unemployment insurance.</p> <p>Fiscal: GPR-backed sum sufficient funding.</p>	
Issue	Any wages earned by an unemployment recipient (above \$30) in a benefit week reduce the recipient’s benefit amount.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permits unemployment recipients to receive wages from immediately-previous employers without a reduction in unemployment benefits.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permits businesses that wish to provide financial assistance to laid-off employees to do so without harming the laid-off employee. • This would be outside of the Work-Share program as it would allow employers to voluntarily pay employees some portion of their wages for hours that are not actually being worked.
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BILL PROVISION: Waive certain parameters related to the Work-Share program due to a PHE.	
Fiscal: GPR-backed sum sufficient funding.	
Issue	There will likely be increased interest in the Work-Share program due to a PHE.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Work-Share program helps employers avoid layoffs by allowing workers to remain employed and employers to retain staff during times of reduced business activity. • Specifically, this provision would waive the following requirements during the PHE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Minimum number of affected employees in a work unit. ○ Hours must be evenly reduced for each affected employee in a work unit. ○ Percent reduction in hours must remain consistent over the term of the Work-Share plan. ○ Six months limit of plan usage over five years.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

BILL PROVISION: Provide funds to support small businesses and workers.	
Fiscal: \$150 million GPR total, inclusive of \$25 million proposed in LRB 5920/P2.	
Issue	WEDC was able to repurpose \$5 million in existing WEDC funds to create the Small Business 20/20 Program, but additional funds are required to extend assistance to small businesses across Wisconsin and those they employ.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Small Business 20/20 Program was created to help mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on small businesses and micro-enterprises in Wisconsin. Additional funding would allow this program to assist more Wisconsin businesses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The program is designed to ease businesses' short-term cash flow challenges and, in conjunction with other state response programs, protect jobs and public health in Wisconsin. ○ Businesses may be granted two months of payroll and rent expenses, up to a maximum of \$20,000. Funds must be used for rent and payroll expenses, including covering paid leave (sick, family and other leave related to COVID-19). • RESTART 72 - Additionally, WEDC would like to provide grants to small businesses to help them and their employees open their doors back up after the PHE. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Would allow WEDC to provide funding to small businesses for what they need whether it's buying perishable inventory, helping employees return to the workforce, or convincing customers to return. • These funds could also be used for WEDC positions to help administer this program and to provide technical assistance to businesses in seeking federal funds available under the CARES Act or other federal legislation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed statutory changes would allow WEDC to temporarily administer forgivable loans as one option in assisting businesses in the aftermath of COVID-19 related business interruption. Proposed statutory changes would allow WEDC to temporarily waive interest penalties on clawbacks as businesses struggle to meet metrics put in place before the PHE. Proposed statutory changes would allow a company to be temporarily eligible in 2020 to receive the business development tax credit based upon activities other than job creation or retention, as long as the net employment does not decrease below the level established on the certification date.
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HOUSING

<p>BILL PROVISION: Create a fund under WHEDA’s oversight to provide an estimated 6 months of support for prevention of single-family foreclosures and allow the subordination of down payment assistance loans to provide refinancing opportunities to current borrowers.</p> <p>Fiscal: \$8 million GPR.</p>	
Issue	WHEDA’s single-family borrowers represent individuals and families anticipated to be among the hardest hit by economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic due to job losses in retail, service and other vulnerable business sectors.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In recent years, WHEDA’s single family mortgage portfolio has performed well with a delinquency rate of just 3.4%. Due to the limited wage prospects in the aftermath of the PHE, it is extremely difficult for borrowers to “catch up” should they fall behind, incur late fees, or miss a monthly payment. WHEDA currently projects that the delinquency rate may triple, resulting in delinquent mortgage payments of up to \$1.3 million per month. Wisconsin families need a safety net as many of them would find their savings and net worth decimated by a foreclosure. This could help protect those most vulnerable to housing instability as well as mitigate negative effects on the tax base in communities statewide.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

<p>BILL PROVISION: Allow online notaries to perform online notarization of estate planning documents (such as wills and trusts) during a public health emergency.</p> <p>Fiscal: No appropriation.</p>	
Issue	Due to the PHE, in-person appointments with notaries may not be feasible or safe.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This would afford Wisconsinites who want to do estate planning during the PHE the ability to do so remotely.

<p>BILL PROVISION: Allow DFI to implement 2019 Wisconsin Act 125 earlier than May 1st and provide funding for implementation costs.</p>

Fiscal: \$806,000 PR (FY 21).	
Issue	Wisconsin Act 125, providing for online notarization, was recently signed into law but is not set to go into effect until May 1 st .
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online notarization is in demand due to the PHE. • Implementation funding will allow DFI to address the need for online access to these services.

REVENUE

BILL PROVISION: Waive interest and penalties on delinquent property taxes included in the 2019 payable 2020 tax roll, on and after April 1, 2020.	
Fiscal: No appropriation.	
Issue	Due to the PHE, a large portion of Wisconsin property owners may not be able to timely pay their property taxes.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a time of financial uncertainty, this allows Wisconsinites to pay their property taxes when they are able, without interest or penalties.

BILL PROVISION: Provide flexibility for municipalities to implement multiple installments of three or more for CY20 property taxes.	
Fiscal: No appropriation.	
Issue	Due to the PHE, a large portion of Wisconsin property owners may not be able to timely pay their property taxes.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a time of financial uncertainty, this allows municipalities to provide flexibility to taxpayers.

BILL PROVISION: Expand county borrowing authority to allow the issuance of bonds up to 10 years in maturity to replace funds lost due to the PHE.	
Fiscal: No appropriation.	
Issue	Counties can only issue tax anticipation notes that mature within the fiscal year, cannot issue other obligations with terms longer than essentially one year, and cannot borrow for operating expenses.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing counties one chance to borrow for the lost sales tax and other revenue experienced during the PHE would allow them to spread their loss over up to 10 years. • The payments would be exempt from the levy limit. • Requires the county board to adopt a resolution stating that the debt is issued to replace lost revenue due to a disaster or PHE.

BILL PROVISION: Increase the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).	
Fiscal: \$26.7 million AF (\$17 million TANF; \$9.7 GPR) (FY 21).	
Issue	Low-income families will be among the hardest hit during and after the PHE.

Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will bring Wisconsin’s EITC more in line with other states’ credits. • Specifically, the provision will increase the percentage of the federal credit that filers with one dependent child may claim from 4% to 11%. For filers with two children, the rate will increase from 11% to 14%. • The EITC is a proven mechanism for encouraging work while providing needed relief to low- and moderate-income families with children.
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PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

BILL PROVISION: Funding to support an additional round of broadband expansion grants.	
Fiscal: \$20 million GPR over the biennium.	
Issue	Disruptions to the healthcare sector and other industries as a result of the PHE have demonstrated the importance of access to reliable internet, which many communities throughout the state do not yet have.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gov. Evers has already made the largest investment in state history by expanding access to broadband internet in underserved communities throughout Wisconsin through the broadband expansion grant program. • Healthcare providers and school leaders, in addition to private industries like dairy and agribusiness, have repeatedly stressed the importance of access to broadband internet. • During the PHE, this need has only intensified as many clinics are providing care via telehealth and public schools are providing virtual learning to students during school closures. • Additional funding is necessary to continue the aggressive expansion of internet access, which will benefit both the economy and public health as the state responds and adjusts to COVID-19.

BILL PROVISION: Provide PSC with the authority to apply emergency orders to unregulated utility cooperatives and propane suppliers during a PHE.	
Fiscal: No appropriation.	
Issue	Utility cooperatives are not regulated by the Public Service Commission and as such are not bound by Emergency Order #11, which prohibits the disconnection of a utility based on inability to pay during a PHE.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It’s critically important to provide flexibility during this emergency, when paychecks might be disrupted, so that Wisconsinites can maintain basic needs. • Following the issuance of Emergency order #11, PSC Chairperson Rebecca Cameron Valcq directed regulated utilities in the state to take the following actions for the duration of the emergency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stop utility disconnection for nonpayment for all customers, including commercial, industrial, and farm accounts. Previously this applied to residential accounts only; ○ Cease assessing late fees to customer accounts and halt the practice of requiring deposits from customers for reconnection of service;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allow deferred payment agreements for all customers who request them; ○ Remove any administrative barriers for customers establishing or reestablishing utility service; and ○ Authorize water utilities to provide budget billing arrangements to customers. Electric and natural gas utilities are allowed to do this under current rules. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utility cooperatives (water, electric, telecoms) are not regulated by the PSC and as such their compliance with this order is voluntary. While many cooperatives are complying with the order, a statutory change would be necessary to ensure consumer protection measures are applied uniformly throughout Wisconsin.
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BILL PROVISION: Prohibit disconnection of utilities from a rental unit by landlords during a PHE.	
Fiscal: No appropriation.	
Issue	Utilities are currently prohibited from disconnection for nonpayment for all customers and there is a moratorium on evictions pursuant to emergency orders. This provision will ensure that landlords do not authorize disconnection of tenant premises during the PHE.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the issuance of Emergency order #11, PSC Chairperson Rebecca Cameron Valcq directed regulated utilities in the state to take the following actions for the duration of the emergency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stop utility disconnection for nonpayment for all customers, including commercial, industrial, and farm accounts. Previously this applied to residential accounts only; ○ Cease assessing late fees to customer accounts; Halt the practice of requiring deposits from customers for reconnection of service; ○ Allow deferred payment agreements for all customers who request them; ○ Remove any administrative barriers for customers establishing or reestablishing utility service; and ○ Authorize water utilities to provide budget billing arrangements to customers. Electric and natural gas utilities are allowed to do this under current rules. • Consumer protection measures enacted to provide flexibility and ensure access to utilities during the PHE should be extended to tenants of rental units.

NATURAL RESOURCES

BILL PROVISION: Extend the PECFA claim submission deadline by one year.	
Fiscal: No appropriation.	
Issue	The COVID-19 PHE has disrupted ongoing activities related to the PECFA program administered by the DNR. A statutory change is necessary in order to change the PECFA program submission deadline.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under current law, the DNR administers a program, commonly known as PECFA (the Petroleum Environmental Cleanup Fund Award), to reimburse owners of certain petroleum product storage tanks for a portion of the costs of cleaning up discharges from those tanks. • Under current law, a person is not eligible for reimbursement unless the person submits a PECFA claim to DNR before July 1, 2020.

- This provision changes the PECFA claim submission deadline to July 1, 2021.

HIGHER EDUCATIONAL AIDS BOARD

BILL PROVISION: Do not penalize a grant recipient who was unable to finish spring semester due to the PHE.

Fiscal: No appropriation.

Issue	The federal government has implemented changes on how they will be counting semesters for the Pell Grant if the student was not able to finish the spring semester due to the PHE.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This would mirror the federal change made with Wisconsin grant programs. • This provision would apply to the following grant programs: Wisconsin Grant, Indian Student Assistance Grant, Handicapped Student Grant, Minority Undergraduate Retention Grant, and the Talent Incentive Grant Program.

TOURISM

BILL PROVISION: Create and fund a Regional Destination Marketing Organization Grant Program.

Fiscal: \$2 million GPR with up to a 25% Department of Tourism match.

Issue	One of the most immediate and hardest hit industries from COVID-19 is the tourism industry.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to uplift our entire industry, rather than just some parts of each region, we propose a \$2 million GPR funded grant program to incentivize coordinated and collaborative marketing and promotion activities to drive larger scale initiatives and enable regional partnerships. • This proposal would model tourism promotion already implemented in other states by urging the creation of regional coalitions to work in unity for greater synergy and awareness building.

BILL PROVISION: Create and fund Co-Op Marketing Programs Grants.

Fiscal: \$3 million GPR.

Issue	One of the most immediate and hardest hit industries from COVID-19 is the tourism industry.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wide variety of businesses and the 199,073 jobs that make up Wisconsin's tourism industry are experiencing drastic and sudden loss of necessary income streams to remain sustainable. • This proposal offsets the loss of room tax for the Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) by temporarily supplementing their buy into current and expanded Co-op marketing programs with the Department.