



# Tony Evers

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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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