



Tony Evers

Office of the Governor | State of Wisconsin

The Honorable Howard Lutnick, Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Lutnick,

Here in Wisconsin, tourism is a powerhouse of economic development and prosperity in our state, and our outdoor recreation industry is a critical component of that success. Whether it's biking, hiking, canoeing, fishing, snowmobiling, skiing—you name it—outdoor recreation is a part of our culture as Wisconsinites and drives local economies. Each year, this vital industry supports thousands of jobs across the state and helps bring in billions of dollars in revenue for local businesses and our statewide economy, so ensuring we have the critical information to continue supporting this industry remains as important as ever.

Since 2018, the Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account, administered by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), has provided essential economic data on the outdoor recreation industry to the sector, our nation, and our state. According to data released in 2024 by the BEA, outdoor recreation contributed more than \$11 billion to Wisconsin's economy in 2023.

Unfortunately, due to the Trump Administration's continued obstruction of important economic data reporting that states rely on, Wisconsin is still waiting on the BEA to send us our 2024 statewide outdoor recreation economic impact data. Without this data, this vital industry in Wisconsin is left to plan and make decisions with an inadequate view of the business and economic landscape, limiting our opportunity for future success. It is crucial that this data be prioritized and made public. I am writing to strongly urge the BEA to release these reports so we can give our industry partners, stakeholders, and state agencies the information they need to effectively bolster our tourism economy and support our state's future success.

Many of our industry partners rely on this data to make sound business decisions, including the several world-class outdoor brands that have taken root here in Wisconsin. Wisconsin is a national leader in American-made outdoor recreation-related manufacturing, ranking fourth in the nation for our share of manufacturing jobs in outdoor recreation and employing the ninth-most workers in this segment of the industry. Releasing data from the Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account is not only a critical resource for our state agencies but also helps to support our workforce.

Wisconsin is also a key destination for winter recreation like downhill and cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling, and our outdoor recreation industry and workforce, as well as several communities across the state, rely heavily on winter recreation businesses. Unfortunately, Wisconsin has experienced unusually mild winters in recent years, which have lacked Wisconsin's typical snowfall in many areas of the state, considerably impacting winter recreation businesses. In addition to delaying vital economic impact data,

the Trump Administration last year also denied Wisconsin's request for a major disaster declaration due to a lack of snow, as well as access to Small Business Administration Economic Injury Loan resources to support impacted businesses that depend on the snow for their winter recreation businesses.

Luckily, my administration and I have made investing in this essential industry a priority here in Wisconsin. From making our Office of Outdoor Recreation a permanent fixture of state government to launching the Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Economic Impact Report, we take pride in making smart, strategic investments to support this industry. While our DIY reports are great for our communities to find their local data, they do not make up for the lack of statewide data from the BEA, and it is imperative that we receive the 2024 report immediately so that we can continue making the strategic investments to support this growing industry.

On behalf of Wisconsin's outdoor recreation businesses and the many hardworking folks in the industry whose efforts make sure visitors come back year after year, I implore you to release the 2024 outdoor recreation economic impact report. Thank you for your immediate attention to this important matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony Evers".

Tony Evers
Governor