



Tony Evers

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

March 20, 2026

To the Honorable Members of the Senate:

I am vetoing Senate Bill 417 in its entirety.

This bill would require assisted living facilities, nursing homes, and hospitals to allow visits under certain circumstances by a member of the clergy or an “essential visitor” as defined by the bill, with residents or patients during an outbreak or epidemic of a communicable disease. In addition, the bill would allow an assisted living facility, nursing home, or hospital to deny visitation with a resident or patient by a member of the clergy or an essential visitor under certain circumstances. Under the bill, if the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid issues more restrictive visitation guidance, an assisted living facility, nursing home, or hospital may, but is not required to, comply with that guidance instead of the visitation requirements under the bill. The bill would allow an individual to file a complaint with the Department of Health Services against an assisted living facility, nursing home, or hospital that fails to comply with the bill’s visitation requirements. Finally, the bill would grant immunity to those complying with it.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Wisconsin State Legislature's efforts to inject partisan politics and rhetoric into public health decisions intended to prevent the spread of deadly disease and save lives. The response to future disease outbreaks should be focused on following the relevant science and the expertise of public health experts to keep Wisconsinites healthy and safe. The responses of future administrations—and efforts to save the lives of future Wisconsinites—should not be hamstrung by the unnecessary, politically driven interference of the present Legislature.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Evers".

Tony Evers
Governor