



Tony Evers

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

March 27, 2026

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing Assembly Bill 225 in its entirety.

This bill would modify how venue is determined in civil actions and special proceedings, limiting the location where litigation involving corporate and business entities should occur. It would prohibit a court from considering the participation of parties or insurers joined in the action when determining whether venue is proper. It would also provide that, for the purposes of venue, a corporate or other business entity "resides" in its place of incorporation or organization, and it does "substantial business" only in the county of its principal place of business.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Wisconsin State Legislature wading unnecessarily into the judicial branch and restricting the judicial discretion of the courts when considering venue challenges. Currently, any party may challenge venue as improper if certain venue requirements are not met. Further, even when venue is proper, a party may ask the court—or the court may opt on its own—to change the venue, with certain limited exceptions, based upon the interests of justice or for the convenience of the parties or witnesses.

I am also vetoing this bill because I object to legislation that would cause more issues than it is meant to resolve. Although the bill is intended to address venue when it involves insurers, its significant narrowing of the meaning of "resides" and "substantial business" would apply much more broadly—to any business entity. Because its definitions would be so narrow but apply so broadly, the provision in practice is likely to lead to more venue challenges, rather than fewer. Particularly problematic would be, despite perhaps having satellite offices or significant business contacts in Wisconsin, how the provision would apply in situations involving business entities who are both organized and have their principal place of business outside of the state. For example, the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance reported in 2024 there are 2,039 entities licensed to write insurance in Wisconsin. Of those, 86 percent were not domiciled here. As drafted, this bill risks elevating business entities, including out-of-state ones, over Wisconsinites.

I am reluctant to upend long-standing statutory procedures by significantly narrowing the definition of substantial business to only the county of principal place of business as this bill proposes. To the extent that it may be appropriate to better define the concept of substantial business, this bill simply goes too far. I believe that overall the current procedures foster fairness and that judges are well positioned to consider the full and complete record before them when considering venue challenges and to allow for changes to more appropriate venues when it is in the interests of justice or the convenience of the parties or witnesses.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony Evers", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Tony Evers
Governor