



# Tony Evers

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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March 27, 2026

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing Assembly Bill 554 in its entirety.

This bill would impose labeling requirements and certain prohibitions on the sale of lab-grown meat defined in the bill as “cultured animal cells or cultured animal tissue derived from cultured animal cells”. “Animal” is further defined as “a mammal, a bird, a reptile, an amphibian, a fish, or a mollusk.” The bill would prohibit selling a packaged food product knowing it contains lab-grown meat unless it is labeled as described in the bill. The bill would also prohibit a person from selling or offering for sale in a public eating place a food product knowing it contains lab-grown meat as a substitute for meat unless such food product is ordered by the customer. The bill would prohibit a person from serving a food product knowing it contains lab-grown meat as a substitute for meat to students, patients, or inmates of any state institution unless certain conditions apply. Finally, the bill would create criminal penalties for violations of its requirements, including imprisonment for three months for the first offense and up to one year for any subsequent offense.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to its vague and arbitrary drafting and the confusion it would create if enacted. By way of one absurd example, under the bill, lab-grown meat can only be sold to a customer if it is ordered by that customer. However, the bill also prohibits offering to sell lab-grown meat. It would appear the bill authors have not considered how a customer could know to order lab-grown meat if it is prohibited from being offered for sale to them. As a further example, the bill’s definition of animal includes a mammal, a bird, a reptile, an amphibian, a fish, or a mollusk but excludes a crustacean. It is unclear why oysters, mussels, and scallops would be covered by the bill, but lobsters, shrimp, and crabs would not.

Additionally, I am vetoing this bill because I object to the potential that a grocer or restauranter could be held criminally liable and even face jail time under this bill due to product mislabeling, despite those entities having no role in the labeling process for products they offer. I support truthful labeling, and I believe consumers should know what is in the products they buy and consume. However, I cannot sign a bill into law that is likely to result in creating more questions than it would answer.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Tony Evers  
Governor