

Assembly sends REINS Act to Walker's desk despite Dem objections

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The state Assembly today approved a bill adding more scrutiny to administrative rules that have an economic impact estimate of at least \$10 million over a two-year period.

The Assembly's approval, on a 62-34 vote, sends the REINS Act to Gov. Scott Walker's desk for his signature. The state Senate approved the bill last month.

The bill requires that rules that meet the \$10 million threshold need to get approval from the Legislature. Agencies would otherwise have to tweak the rule to reduce the costs below \$10 million if they want to implement it.

Dems criticized Rep. Adam Neylon's proposal, saying it would effectively put a halt to the rulemaking process and implementation of laws the Legislature passed.

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The bill allows the Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules to permanently object to a proposed rule to prevent the agency from going forward with it. Currently, if the JCRAR objects to a proposed rule, it has to introduce bills in both houses of the Legislature to support the objection. The objection is temporary unless one of the bills becomes law.

Rep. Cory Mason, D-Racine, said that essentially gives "special interests a veto on rules," while Rep. Katrina Shankland, D-Stevens Point, warned about the impacts that would have on the environment, citizens' health and the environment.

"Some of us actually want the government to promote the public interest and not

the special interests,” she said. “We don’t want to give the reins over to private business and let them run the government.”

But Rep. Bob Gannon, R-Slinger, said it’s important to get further review of agency rules, saying he’d like to see the bill apply to even more rules because \$10 million is “a crazy flipping number for the people in my district.”

Neylon, meanwhile, said the bill is an “important step to improving our regulatory process” that would help the private sector grow.

He told reporters ahead of today’s session that another look at “costly, often-burdensome new rules” is necessary.

“If it does have an impact of over \$10 million, I think it’s important that we do slow down the process,” he said.