

Senate approves nine of the gov's welfare bills

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The state Senate today signed off along party lines on all but one of the gov's welfare bills, clearing the way for the nine pieces of legislation to head to his desk.

The package, backed by Republicans, includes:

*SSAB 1, which would up the work requirement for FoodShare to 30 hours from the current requirement of 20 hours.

*SSAB 2, which would require expand work requirements for food stamps that now apply only to able-bodied adults to those have school-aged dependents.

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*SSAB 3, which would create asset limits for food stamps, W-2 or Wisconsin Shares.

*SSAB 4, which would add drug screening to the application process for those seeking public housing.

*SSAB 5, which would create a two-year pilot program to make monthly payments to those who received the Earned Income Tax Credit rather than waiting until after they've filed their tax returns to send them a lump sum.

*SSAB 6, which would require DHS and DCF to create performance-based payment systems for W-2 and food stamps vendors.

*SSAB 7, which would allow DOA to contract with a private vendor to create a "pay for success trust fund." Those with a proposal to address an issue with social, employment or correctional services provided to individuals could bring it to the state and then negotiate an incentive based on the expected budget savings. That

money would be set aside and the state would only pay the vendor if the goal was achieved.

*SSAB 8, which would cut off from Medicaid those able-bodied adults who refuse to cooperate with a paternity test or comply with a child support order.

*SSAB 9, which would create a savings account program for Medicaid.

The Senate did not take up SSAB 10, which would add photo IDs to food stamp cards. That Assembly signed off on that bill earlier this month. But those opposed include the Wisconsin Grocers Association, which last week sent a memo to members of a Senate committee outlining several concerns. That includes a federal requirement that those who receive food stamps be treated the same as other customers during transactions. The memo notes, for example, that Visa's merchant contract states stores cannot make an ID a condition of a transaction using that company's credit card.