

Evers calls special session on police policies in wake of Kenosha shooting

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Gov. Tony Evers announced today he is calling a special session on a package of proposals he released earlier this summer to overhaul police policies.

Evers released the package after the death of George Floyd at the hands of a Minneapolis Police officer, but didn't call a special session at the time despite calls from Black Wisconsin lawmakers.

He signed an executive order today calling the special session for noon Aug. 31 in the wake of a Kenosha Police officer shooting a Black man in the back following a domestic disturbance call.

Evers said he wanted to be clear "this is not the time for politics," but for legislative action.

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"I'm urging Republican leadership to rise up to this important moment in history, to put people before politics and to put the lives of Black Wisconsinites above politics and to give this special session the urgent and productive effort this movement demands and that the people of Wisconsin deserve," he said in a message that was live streamed early this afternoon.

While the gov can call a special session, he can't force lawmakers to act. He told reporters on a conference call that he left a message for Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald, R-Juneau, and spoke with Assembly Speaker Robin Vos, R-Rochester, about his special session call.

He wasn't optimistic the Legislature would meet after his call with Vos.

“In general, he seemed to be unmoved by my request,” Evers said.

The gov’s package of bills includes establishing a policy that police officers only use deadly force as a last result and banning chokeholds.

Meanwhile, Vos has [announced](#) plans for a task force on racial disparities, educational opportunities, public safety, and police policies and standards. The announcement didn’t include details such as membership of the task force or when it would first meet.

Vos said in a statement he asked Evers to work with the Legislature through the task force when they spoke.

“Instead, the governor is choosing to turn to politics again by dictating liberal policies that will only deepen the divisions in our state,” Vos said.