

Senate sends ban on mandatory COVID vaccines, restrictions on closing houses of worship to governor

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The Senate today approved Assembly bills to ban mandatory vaccines for COVID-19 and restrict officials' ability to limit meetings in houses of worship to control the pandemic.

No member rose to debate the bills, which passed on voice vote. They next head to Gov. Tony Evers, who is expected to veto them.

Under current law, Department of Health Services and local health officers have powers to control communicable diseases, including what is "reasonable and necessary." During a declared state of emergency, DHS may order an individual to receive a vaccination unless it is likely to lead to serious harm or if the person has religious or conscience objections.

AB 23 would bar mandatory vaccinations for COVID-19 or any variants or mutations.

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Meanwhile, AB 23 would prohibit officials from restricting meetings in houses of worship or closing them in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.