

Gov. Evers: Highlights 2022 accomplishments

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today celebrated his and the Evers Administration's work serving the people of Wisconsin over the past year, releasing a list of accomplishments as 2022 comes to an end. This comes as [yesterday](#) Gov. Evers provided a wrap-up of his 2022 72-county tour visiting every Wisconsin county over the last year—his third 72-county tour since taking office in 2019.

Among Gov. Evers' and the Evers Administration's accomplishments include enacting more than 140 bipartisan bills, making critical investments directed by Gov. Evers into helping working families, schools, farmers, and businesses, among others, through federal pandemic relief funds, continued progress to support our kids and our schools, fix the roads, and expand access to healthcare through investments in the 2021-23 biennial budget, a record-high projected surplus of more than \$6.5 billion at the end of this fiscal year and an all-time high amount in the state's 'rainy day' fund, and the vital work of state workers and agencies to support Wisconsinites in every corner of the state in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

"Over my first term in office, we strived to build an economy that works for everyone, fix the darn roads, make smart and strategic fiscal decisions, do what's best for our kids and our schools, and to ensure the will of the people is the law of the land, especially in the face of unprecedented challenges," said Gov. Evers. "In 2022, we continued our work to meet with Wisconsinites in every corner of our state and hear about their successes, their resilience, and their willingness to give back to their communities, whether they were EMS providers, school cafeteria workers, parents, or small business owners.

"I'm incredibly proud of all we've accomplished this year. Wisconsin is in the best

fiscal position in state history while also being the top state in the country for American Rescue Plan Act aid allocated to small businesses and economic development. We've worked hard to help address rising costs and invest in our kids and our schools, veterans, roads and bridges, community safety, and critical projects that connect the dots on access to healthcare, childcare, transportation, and family-supporting jobs. And I'm excited to keep working together to build the bright, prosperous future we want for our state."

A comprehensive but not exhaustive list of Gov. Evers' and the Evers Administration's 2022 achievements is available below.

Building a Strong Economy and Bolstering Wisconsin's Workforce

Gov. Evers [celebrated](#) news from the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) that the state of Wisconsin is in the strongest fiscal position in state history, as the state is projected to end the current fiscal year with a record-high surplus and an all-time high 'rainy day' fund (the Budget Stabilization Fund). DOA projects a gross general fund balance of more than \$6.5 billion at the end of the current fiscal year. This record-setting figure does not include the roughly \$1.734 billion currently in the state's 'rainy day' fund. Gov. Evers also celebrated that the state's unemployment rate remains below the national average, while Wisconsin's labor participation rate—the share of working-age adults currently employed—remains above the national average. Gov. Evers, together with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), [announced](#) a \$250,000 state grant to help transform a blighted shopping mall in Prairie du Chien into a vibrant commercial development and 96 affordable family apartments. Gov. Evers [announced](#) \$21.9 million in Tourism Capital Investment Grants for 27 local governments and organizations for major capital improvement projects across the state that help promote, maintain, and bolster Wisconsin's tourism industry. The announcement was a continuation of the governor's efforts to support Wisconsin's tourism industry. Since 2020, Gov. Evers has prioritized more than \$200 million in support for the travel, tourism, lodging, and entertainment industries. After Legislative Republicans rejected the governor's plan to provide a permanent \$5 per hour pay increase for security employees using state resources, Gov. Evers [announced](#) a \$3 per hour add-on for correctional officers and sergeants, psychiatric care technicians, youth counselors, and related supervisors using federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. The \$3 per hour add-on went into effect on March 13, 2022, for all eligible employees, impacting more than 5,000 personnel. Gov. Evers, together with the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, [announced](#) Wisconsin had outpaced the

national average for travel spending compared to 2019 for the past 24 months, according to data from a national report. Later in the year, Gov. Evers also [announced](#) that Wisconsin tourism spending had grown 5.9 percent in September 2022, the largest gain of any month since the start of the coronavirus pandemic when compared to the same month in 2019, which was Wisconsin's best year on record for visitor spending. Gov. Evers also [announced](#) that annual data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis show Wisconsin's outdoor recreation industry contributed a record-setting \$8.7 billion to the state's gross domestic product in 2021. Additionally, Wisconsin's outdoor economy grew by 14.1 percent—more than three times faster than the state's overall economy, which grew by 4.6 percent. Gov. Evers [announced](#) WEDC is assisting Arrowhead Pharmaceuticals, a leading genetic medicine company, with \$2.5 million in performance-based business development tax credits, which the company will receive if it meets or exceeds its job creation and capital investment goals by the end of 2026. The investment supports Arrowhead Pharmaceuticals' \$220 million expansion in Verona that will create more than 230 high-paying jobs. Wisconsin was one of 10 states to [participate](#) in the National Governors Association knowledge exchange network for the Next Generation of the Healthcare Workforce Learning Collaborative program. As part of this group, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD), the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS), and other partners gained access to workforce resources and participated in discussions about best practices to support healthcare workers. At an event celebrating the opening of Fincantieri Marinette Marine's newest facility, Gov. Evers [announced](#) the Evers Administration will be supporting the shipyard's \$300 million expansion with up to \$12 million in state tax credits through the WEDC. The full expansion is expected to create 400 new jobs. Gov. Evers announced several efforts to address both pandemic-related and pre-existing shortages of Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) in the state's hospitals and nursing homes. This included an innovative, new initiative to train Wisconsin National Guard members as CNAs. A total of [154 Wisconsin National Guard members](#) completed CNA training, resulting in 226 beds opening at nursing homes as of March 7, 2022. Additionally, in July, Gov. Evers and DHS [launched](#) a \$6 million expansion of the successful WisCaregiver Careers workforce development program, which recruits and trains qualified individuals to become CNAs. Part of the more than \$128 million [Workforce Innovation Grant Program](#), Gov. Evers [announced](#) up to \$19.5 million in grants for Lakeshore Technical College, the Wisconsin Forestry Center at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, and Northwood Technical College for

projects that support long-term solutions to Wisconsin's workforce challenges and promote workforce development across 22 counties in Wisconsin's Northwest, North, Northeast, and East regions. Gov. Evers [announced](#) more than \$6.6 million in [Workforce Innovation Grants](#) to support youth apprenticeship opportunities, job training and upskilling in advanced manufacturing, and the [GROW scholarship program](#), which is designed to help build the next generation of highly qualified rural teachers. The grants were awarded to Southwest Wisconsin Technical College, Boys & Girls Club of Dane County, and the Wisconsin Heights School District, and the projects span 10 counties in Southwest and Central Wisconsin. Gov.

Evers [announced](#) more than \$5 million in [Workforce Innovation Grants](#) for the Wisconsin Community Action Program Association (WISCAP) and the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, through the University of Wisconsin (UW) System Board of Regents, for training efforts that support long-term solutions to Wisconsin's healthcare workforce challenges. Funds will support employee recruitment and success through retention bonuses, employer reimbursement and success bonuses, and mentorships. Gov. Evers [announced](#) up to \$9.7 million in [Workforce Innovation Grants](#) for the Waupaca County Economic Development Association and Goodwill Industries of North Central Wisconsin to support access to local transportation options for employees and employers to get to and from work. These grants will also support programs that use a trauma-informed approach to workforce education and services to engage individuals from unserved and underserved populations in the local workforce. These programs will reach folks in five counties in North Central and Northeast Wisconsin. Gov. Evers [announced](#) up to \$23.3 million in [Workforce Innovation Grants](#) for MobilISE, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, the Community Relations-Social Development Commission, and the Down Syndrome Association of Wisconsin Inc. for projects that address local needs for early care and education teachers and support career opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Gov. Evers [announced](#) \$4.6 million in [Workforce Innovation Grants](#) for the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians to support water infrastructure in a 32-unit workforce housing development specifically designed to address local workforce needs, such as proximity to local employers and transportation options to get to work. Gov. Evers and WEDC [joined](#) Komatsu leaders for the grand opening of the company's new campus in Milwaukee's Harbor District, a \$285 million project with the potential to bring more than 1,000 jobs to a long-dormant area of the city. The project was supported with up to \$59.5 million in performance-based enterprise zone tax credits from WEDC. Gov. Evers signed agreements with Chairman Ned Daniels Jr. of the Forest County Potawatomi, Chairman Louis Taylor of the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake

Superior Chippewa Indians, and Chairman Robert VanZile Jr. of the Sokaogon Chippewa Community, enabling the Tribes to offer event wagering within their reservations and at certain other locations. Gov. Evers has previously signed similar compacts with the Oneida Nation and the St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin. Gov. Evers, together with WEDC, [celebrated](#) Milwaukee Tool's newest manufacturing plant opening in West Bend, which was [supported with](#) \$22.5 million in Enterprise Zone tax credits from WEDC, raising the state's total investment in the company's success to \$70.5 million. Building on his work to get more students involved in high-demand careers and advanced workforce training programs, Gov. Evers, together with DWD, invested more than \$800,000 through the Wisconsin Fast Forward grant program to help school districts across the state purchase specialized equipment and machinery. In October, Gov. Evers [announced](#) up to \$700,000 in additional funding through this grant program. Thanks to ongoing modernization efforts by DWD, Gov. Evers [announced](#) 14 new Youth Apprenticeship pathways for high school juniors and seniors, including programs in agriculture, natural resources, health science, manufacturing, aviation maintenance, and more. This year, Wisconsin's Youth Apprenticeship program reached a record 6,412 participants working at a record 4,478 employers. Gov. Evers and DWD [announced](#) that Wisconsin surpassed 15,000 participants in the Registered Apprenticeship program—the highest participation rate in the program in two decades. After a fire caused BP's Whiting, Indiana, oil refinery to temporarily go offline, Gov. Evers [took action](#) to protect Wisconsin's gasoline supply. The governor requested a regional emergency declaration and appropriate waivers, which were soon after granted by the Federal Motor Carriers Safety Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency, to proactively prevent potential fuel supply issues that could have otherwise disrupted the flow of Wisconsin's economy. Gov. Evers [announced](#) a \$1 million initiative led by the UW-Madison Division of Extension and WEDC to provide training, technical assistance, and legal and financial advice to rural entrepreneurs in need of support to start or bolster an existing business. Gov. Evers and DATCP [announced](#) an additional investment of \$10 million in the state's two largest hunger relief organizations. This announcement brings the governor's total investment in food security to \$65 million since the coronavirus pandemic began.

Addressing Rising Costs and National Inflation for Wisconsin Families and Communities

Gov. Evers rang in the new year by [announcing](#) changes to withholding tax tables,

allowing Wisconsinites to keep more money in their pockets throughout the year. Based on the directed changes and tax cuts Gov. Evers has signed into law during his time in office, over the course of this year, a single filer making \$50,000 will have seen \$551 more in their paychecks, while a married couple each earning \$50,000 will have seen over \$1,200 more in their paychecks combined. After the nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau (LFB) released new projections in January indicating the state general fund balance would have a \$3.8 billion surplus at the end of the 2021-23 biennium, Gov. Evers [unveiled](#) his first plan to use a portion of this surplus to address rising costs facing Wisconsin families. The governor's plan would have provided a \$150 surplus refund to every Wisconsin resident—meaning a family of four would receive \$600—as well as targeted tax relief for caregiving and childcare and nearly \$750 million to improve school quality and address achievement gaps, all while holding the line on property taxes. Gov. Evers [called a special session](#) of the Wisconsin State Legislature to take up this plan, but legislative Republicans [refused to take action](#). Later in the year, Gov. Evers [announced](#) a new plan to use the state's historic projected surplus to provide \$600 million in tax relief for working families, veterans, and seniors, cap copays for insulin, lower gas prices by repealing the minimum markup law, and reduce barriers to employment by making childcare more affordable and providing a Caregivers Tax Credit. Republicans in the Legislature have also refused to take up this plan, or any plan, to provide relief from national inflation for Wisconsinites. Gov. Evers [announced](#) the launch of the [Wisconsin Help for Homeowners program](#), which has so far disbursed \$26 million to help nearly 4,000 Wisconsin homeowners stay in their homes. The deadline to apply for assistance is Dec. 30, 2022, and eligible homeowners can receive up to \$40,000 in assistance with mortgage payments, local property taxes, and utilities, including internet, as well as housing counseling and legal services. As of December 2022, the Evers Administration has distributed more than \$400 million in rental assistance, home energy, weatherization, and other direct support programs. More specifically, more than 200,000 households received \$120 million in energy assistance, more than 5,000 households received nearly \$60 million in weatherization assistance, and more than \$230 million was distributed to help with rent and utility bills through the [Wisconsin Emergency Rental Assistance program](#). The Evers Administration has invested \$3.3 million through the Safe Shelter and Homelessness Grant Program to fund a total of 1,204,484 shelter nights for 21,123 Wisconsinites. Gov. Evers [joined](#) several governors in sending a [joint letter](#) to urge congressional leaders to quickly pass the Gas Prices Relief Act of 2022, which would have lowered gas prices by suspending the

federal gas tax through the end of the year. Soon after, Gov. Evers [signed](#) Emergency Order #170, declaring a [period of abnormal economic disruption](#) in the state of Wisconsin and prohibiting price gouging of gasoline and diesel. Amid the national infant formula shortage, which substantially disrupted normal business transactions and caused prices to increase and some retailers to ration supplies, Gov. Evers [signed Emergency Order #164](#), prohibiting infant formula price gouging. In September, Gov. Evers [announced](#) a \$16.6 million investment to help Wisconsin families keep their energy and heat on throughout the fall and winter months. This investment included \$13.6 million for the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program for heating assistance and \$3 million for the Keep Wisconsin Warm/Cool Fund for crisis energy assistance.

Doing What's Best for Kids

During his 2022 State of the State address, Gov. Evers [announced](#) \$15 million for a new "Get Kids Ahead" initiative to support school-based mental health services in K-12 schools across the state. Gov. Evers later [announced](#) an additional \$15 million investment in the program, bringing the total allocation to \$30 million. During his State of the State address, Gov. Evers [announced](#) a \$5 million investment in the University of Wisconsin (UW) System to help enrolled students access mental health supports remotely and on campus. As part of a statewide tour welcoming kids, parents, educators, staff, and administrators back to school for the 2022-23 school year, Gov. Evers [announced](#) a \$90 million investment into K-12 education across the state. This investment includes the additional \$15 million for the "Get Kids Ahead" initiative and \$75 million to give districts flexibility to meet staffing needs, keep classroom sizes small, and provide other direct classroom support. Gov. Evers [announced](#) \$1 million in funding for the Teacher Training and Recruitment Grant program, which provides Wisconsin nonprofits with up to \$500,000 to recruit, train, and license teachers to meet the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) guidelines for serving low-income and/or urban area school districts. Gov. Evers and DHS [announced](#) \$8.3 million in funding to support K-12 school health service staff in schools throughout the state. This first-of-its-kind funding will support the hiring and retention of school nurses and health staff in K-12 schools and provide funding for school nurses to pursue wellness activities and professional development. Gov. Evers [announced](#) the state of Wisconsin received a \$15 million competitive grant from the U.S. Department of Labor for DWD to help bolster the early childhood education workforce and boost access and improve the sustainability of quality, affordable childcare and early childhood education for

working families. The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) [announced](#) an additional \$194 million investment for programs aimed at supporting Wisconsin's early care and education industry and the families it serves. This announcement included funding to extend the monthly [Child Care Counts payment program](#) through the end of 2023 and expand the [T.E.A.C.H.](#) and [REWARD](#) programs, among other innovative initiatives. DCF [announced](#) Project Growth, a \$20 million grant program designed to help solve the challenges facing Wisconsin's childcare system and bolster the state's economy. Project Growth offers two unique grants aimed at making high-quality, affordable childcare more accessible and sustainable across Wisconsin. Wisconsin [issued](#) \$3 million in benefits to more than 44,000 families for almost 62,000 children under the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) Program for the 2021-2022 school year, providing vital food benefits for children who, because of COVID-19, missed the free or reduced priced meals they would normally have gotten at their school. Gov. Evers [received](#) the Boys & Girls Clubs of America State Alliance Champion of the Year Award at their 2022 National Conference in Chicago. The award recognizes leaders and decision-makers who make significant contributions to the nation's youth along with organizations that serve them, like the Boys & Girls Clubs. Gov. Evers [announced](#) more than \$1 million in federal funding for existing and new summer youth programming and job training opportunities in Milwaukee in collaboration with Employ Milwaukee, the city of Milwaukee, Milwaukee Public Library, and Milwaukee Public Schools. In September, Gov. Evers, together with State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jill Underly, [announced](#) their shared priorities for the 2023-25 K-12 education budget, which includes investments to improve reading and literacy outcomes, expand access to student mental health services and school nutrition, invest in financial literacy and out-of-school programming, address staffing shortages to help keep class sizes small, and increase per pupil and special education aids while holding the line on property taxes. Gov. Evers, together with DCF, [announced](#) the state would invest \$7.5 million to enhance programming for children and youth with complex by implementing a multi-pronged approach to serve more children in-state, reducing the likelihood of them having to receive specialized care out of state and away from their communities and support networks. As students started the new school year, Gov. Evers [visited](#) five UW System campuses across the state to meet with students and discuss the issues that matter to them, such as climate change, reproductive healthcare, college affordability, and workforce challenges.

Building Safer Communities

Since February, Gov. Evers has directed more than \$69 million to support and stabilize emergency medical services (EMS) providers in communities across the state. During his 2022 State of the State address, Gov. Evers [announced](#) the state would provide nearly \$30 million to support EMS providers, especially in rural communities, including \$8 million in one-time, supplemental funding for the Funding Assistance Program (FAP), which was [awarded in August](#). To help fill any gaps for providers that were ineligible for FAP funding, Gov. Evers allocated an additional \$12 million for a new one-time, flexible grant program, now known as the EMS Flex Grant Program. In September, Gov. Evers [announced](#) he was investing an additional \$20 million into the EMS Flex Grant Program based on substantial need, and these grants were awarded to 442 EMS providers in nearly every county across the state. The governor also provided \$7.4 million to implement an additional 16 percent rate increase for emergency transportation providers through the Wisconsin Medicaid program. Earlier this year, the governor [announced](#) a \$22 million investment to support fire station construction and expansion, EMS and emergency medical response (EMR) program support and expansion projects, and other permanent healthcare infrastructure in eight communities across the state. Gov. Evers [announced](#) a more than \$50 million investment in community safety, bringing the governor's overall investment in violence prevention and public safety to more than \$100 million. The more than \$50 million investment included nearly \$19 million for local and tribal law enforcement agencies, as well as funding to help alleviate the pandemic-related backlog of criminal cases through additional public defender and assistant district attorney support. The package also contains investments throughout the criminal justice system, providing both the opportunity to return to pre-pandemic levels and fund evidence-based initiatives aimed at keeping Wisconsinites safe. Gov. Evers [announced](#) the release of \$8.4 million for the city of Milwaukee's Office of Violence Prevention following approval by the Milwaukee Common Council. The funding is part of the governor's larger [\\$45 million investment](#), announced in October 2021, to address crime, ensure safer communities through violence prevention, and provide support for crime victims. In May, Gov. Evers [announced](#) more than \$2.2 million in funding for violence prevention in the city of Milwaukee and to help the Milwaukee Police Department take immediate steps to address crime. Gov. Evers later [announced](#) nearly \$800,000 in federal funding for community safety initiatives in the city of Racine, focusing on a public health approach to violence prevention. Gov. Evers [signed three bills](#) to address substance use and overdose deaths in Wisconsin, including [2021 Wisconsin Act 180](#), which legalized fentanyl testing strips. In October, DHS [announced](#) that, since Act 180 was enacted, 120,600

fentanyl test strips have been distributed to organizations across the state to help prevent drug overdose deaths. Gov. Evers [signed 10 bills](#) to promote public safety and support crime victims, survivors, and their families, including [2021 Wisconsin Act 182](#), which allows a parent to petition a court to change the name of a minor under the age of 14 if the non-petitioning parent is convicted of certain homicide or sex offenses; [2021 Wisconsin Act 183](#), which requires the Department of Justice (DOJ) to collect certain information on search warrants and issue an annual report relating to no-knock entry in the execution of a search warrant; [2021 Wisconsin Act 185](#), which creates a grant program to assist local law enforcement agencies with the costs of purchasing officer body cameras; and [2021 Wisconsin Act 188](#), which makes sexual contact or intercourse by a law enforcement officer with a person detained or in custody second-degree sexual assault. Gov. Evers [vetoed](#) several bills that would have put public safety at risk, including Assembly Bills [495](#) and [597](#), which both would have weakened Wisconsin's gun-free school zone law and allowed for an increased presence of firearms—including loaded firearms—on school grounds, and [Assembly Bill 518](#), which would have allowed non-residents to carry concealed weapons in Wisconsin without meeting the same background check criteria as Wisconsin residents. In August, Gov. Evers [announced](#) DOC selected a site for a new Type 1 youth correctional facility on West Clinton Avenue in the city of Milwaukee, a major step in the long-obstructed efforts to close both Lincoln Hills School for Boys and Copper Lake School for Girls, restructure Wisconsin's youth justice system, and responsibly move kids in DOC care closer to home as soon and as safely as possible. Later that same week, the Milwaukee Common Council voted to support the West Clinton Avenue site's selection, fulfilling a requirement included in [2021 Wisconsin Act 252](#), which Gov. Evers signed [earlier this year](#) and provided \$42 million to build the facility. In December, the Grandville Advisory Committee and the City Plan Commission of Milwaukee also approved the site. Gov. Evers [announced](#) an additional \$20 million investment for public safety in Milwaukee County to support the construction of the Center for Forensic Science and Protective Medicine, which will house the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office and the Milwaukee County Office of Emergency Management. The Center is also being funded with \$99.5 million in state funds that were [approved](#) by the State Building Commission in August for the new DOJ Milwaukee Crime Lab. Gov. Evers [announced](#) a \$2.7 million investment in domestic violence programs, as well as emergency and homelessness shelter services, including \$1 million for the Sojourner Family Peace Center, \$1.2 million for Safe Shelter and Homelessness Grants, and \$500,000 for homeless case management services through the State

Shelter Subsidy Grant Program to help ensure support and services are available for families and individuals who need them. After years of legislative Republicans forcing communities and local partners to do more with less as costs for public services have gone up and state aid has been cut or held flat, Gov. Evers [announced](#) his 2023-25 biennial budget proposal would include more than \$100 million to increase shared revenue to support statewide public safety, including a new \$10 million shared revenue public safety supplement to specifically address EMS, police, and fire costs. This announcement builds on the governor's significant investments throughout the year to help ensure local municipalities have the resources to fund essential services residents rely on. Gov. Evers has granted more than 600 pardons since reinstating the pardon process that had been dormant during the previous administration. To date, the governor has pardoned more individuals than any other governor in contemporary history.

Supporting Wisconsin's Small Businesses

A [recent analysis](#) of state allocations of federal aid under ARPA showed that, as a share of federal aid received by states and directed by Gov. Evers, Wisconsin is the top state in the country for aid directed to overall economic development and the top state in the country for aid directed to assist businesses. Since it was first announced in April 2021, Gov. Evers has [directed](#) \$100 million to the Main Street Bounceback Grant Program, which provides \$10,000 grants to help small businesses and nonprofits move into previously vacant commercial spaces on Main Streets throughout the state. To date, more than 7,800 small businesses and nonprofits have been approved for Main Street Bounceback Grants to fill empty storefronts in all 72 counties throughout Wisconsin. The program seeks to help a total of 10,000 small businesses and nonprofits. First announced in October 2021, Gov. Evers has [awarded](#) more than \$73 million through the Diverse Business Assistance Grant Program and more than \$42 million through the Diverse Business Investment Grant Program to support small businesses in communities disproportionately impacted by the pandemic that have historically had difficulty accessing credit and capital. In March, Gov. Evers [signed](#) Assembly Bill 717, now 2021 Wisconsin Act 156 (Act 156), to assist Wisconsin restaurants as they continue to rebound and recover from the effects of the coronavirus pandemic. For the second consecutive year, Gov. Evers [launched](#) "Shop Small Wisconsin," an enterprise-wide initiative to encourage Wisconsinites to shop local and support Wisconsin's Main Streets during the holiday season.

Creating Healthier Communities

Gov. Evers [announced](#) a five percent increase in reimbursement rates for several types of home and community-based services provided to members of Wisconsin's Medicaid programs, including older adults and adults and children with disabilities. Gov. Evers and the Wisconsin Office of the Commissioner of Insurance [announced](#) that beginning January 15, all health plans would be required to cover the cost of over-the-counter, at-home diagnostic COVID-19 tests for their members. Gov. Evers [signed](#) Senate Bill 395, now [2021 Wisconsin Act 122](#), which combats elder abuse by establishing response and investigation requirements for reports of abuse, financial exploitation, neglect, or self-neglect of adults at risk and elderly adults at risk. During his 2022 State of the State address, Gov. Evers [announced](#) a \$5 million investment in the Wisconsin National Guard's Comprehensive Wellness Office to expand access to case management, counseling, referral services, suicide prevention services, psychological health programs, resiliency training, crisis intervention, and stress reduction programs and training. Through the [Healthcare Infrastructure Capital Investment Grant Program](#), Gov. Evers announced funding for several projects to expand access to healthcare in communities across the state, including support for new clinics and health facilities in Elroy, Racine, and Park Falls and increased services in Appleton, Edgerton, and Rock County. Gov. Evers [signed two bills](#) to support Wisconsin's healthcare providers and patients, including allowing hospital services to be provided in a home setting and making it a Class H felony to assault or threaten healthcare providers or staff members and their families. Gov. Evers [signed](#) Assembly Bill 82, now [2021 Wisconsin Act 210](#), at Waukesha North High School. The Act requires DPI to work with the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association and two pediatric cardiologists to develop and distribute information on the nature and risks of sudden cardiac arrest at school athletic events. Assembly Bill 82 was introduced in honor of Kai Lermer, a 16-year-old student-athlete at Waukesha North High School, who tragically passed away in 2019 after going into cardiac arrest while playing basketball due to an undiagnosed heart condition. Gov. Evers [announced](#) a \$5 million investment to make telehealth services, including mental and behavioral health services, more accessible by bolstering child psychiatry telehealth services and establishing neighborhood telehealth access points. An estimated 1,100 Wisconsin Medicaid members struggling with opioid use disorder will have access to residential treatment this year, thanks to \$2.5 million in grants DHS [awarded](#) to agencies serving 54 counties and four Tribes. Gov. Evers and DHS [announced](#) Wisconsin's SeniorCare Program received approval from the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to cover certain vaccines members receive in pharmacies. Vaccines covered include those that

protect against shingles, tetanus, meningitis, and Hepatitis A and B. Gov. Evers and DHS [awarded](#) more than \$2.5 million to 27 providers for community behavioral health services that will provide access to mental health and substance use treatment and recovery supports through telehealth. The Legislature's Joint Committee on Finance approved DHS's plan to invest nearly [\\$31 million](#) that Wisconsin is expecting to receive for 2022 from the National Prescription Opiate Litigation settlement. Over the past year, Gov. Evers has [invested](#) more than \$100 million in ARPA funding to increase access to mental health and substance use services, enhance programs and resources for children in need, and bolster the behavioral health workforce. This funding includes Gov. Evers' investments in expanding mental health services in K-12 schools, the UW-System, and the National Guard, as well as a [\\$46.6 million increase](#) for the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant and the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant. DHS [announced](#) that it received a five-year grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to prevent suicide in the state. Gov. Evers and DHS [announced](#) \$16 million in grants to improve maternal and child health. Through collaborations with the Medical College of Wisconsin Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment and the UW School of Medicine and Public Health, the funding will help close gaps in maternal and child health outcomes. DHS [awarded](#) \$12 million to 43 organizations focusing on improving home and community-based services for the elderly and individuals with disabilities. The awarded projects use creative ways to improve and expand the state's direct care workforce, such as inventive recruitment and retention strategies and innovative and targeted marketing, and awards will reach all 72 counties in Wisconsin. In November, DHS [announced](#) that Medicaid cost coverage for nursing homes will increase from 77 percent for fiscal year 2022 to 91 percent for fiscal year 2023, with a significant amount of the increase tied to direct care nursing and supporting the healthcare workforce in both wages and benefits. In November, DHS [announced](#) that Wisconsinites can order free at-home rapid COVID-19 tests and have them delivered directly to their house through the state-supported [Say Yes! COVID Test program](#).

Defending Reproductive Freedom

In January, on the eve of the 49th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade*, Gov. Evers [joined](#) Attorney General Josh Kaul, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin, other reproductive healthcare advocates, State Sen. Kelda Roys (D-Madison), Rep. Lisa Subeck (D-Madison), and other Democratic

lawmakers in calling on the Wisconsin State Legislature to defend access to reproductive healthcare in Wisconsin by passing [Senate Bill 75](#), which would have repealed Wisconsin's 1849-era abortion ban. After a draft U.S. Supreme Court opinion in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* revealed the Supreme Court was poised to overturn *Roe*, Gov. Evers [led a coalition](#) of 17 governors in calling for the U.S. Congress to take immediate action to codify the rights and protections prescribed in *Roe v. Wade*. After months of inaction from legislative Republicans, Gov. Evers [called](#) a special session of the Legislature to take up legislation to repeal Wisconsin's criminal abortion ban. Republican legislators [gaveled in and out](#) of the special session in moments without any discussion or debate. Days later, the U.S. Supreme Court released its decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. Within days of the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Dobbs*, Gov. Evers and Attorney General Josh Kaul [announced](#) a new lawsuit challenging Wisconsin's criminal abortion ban. Building on these efforts to restore reproductive freedom in Wisconsin, in September, Gov. Evers again [called](#) a special session of the Legislature, this time calling for the creation of creating a pathway for Wisconsinites to repeal Wisconsin's 1849-era criminal abortion ban at the ballot box through a statewide referendum. Although legislative Republicans once again gaveled out of the special session without taking action and failed to listen to the majority of Wisconsinites who support safe, legal access to abortion in Wisconsin, Gov. Evers remains committed to defending against attacks on reproductive healthcare in Wisconsin.

Supporting Wisconsin Farmers and Agriculture

Gov. Evers [announced](#) up to \$5 million in meat talent development assistance grants to attract and provide financial support to students in Wisconsin meat processing training programs, as well as support program development and connect the meat processing industry with potential employees. In February, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) [successfully requested](#) the release of more than \$558,000 from the Legislature's Joint Finance Committee for the Wisconsin Initiative for Agriculture Exports (WIAE), an initiative to promote the export of Wisconsin's agricultural products that Gov. Evers first proposed in his 2021-23 budget. Later in the year, Gov. Evers [signed](#) Senate Bill 827, now [2021 Wisconsin Act 207](#), which allows DATCP to supplement these efforts with an additional \$883,160. Gov. Evers [created](#) the Meat and Poultry Supply Chain Resiliency Grant Program and [announced](#) that 91 meat processors were selected to receive a total of \$10

million in ARPA funding through the program to continue to grow Wisconsin's meat processing industry and improve the long-term viability of the state's livestock industry. Gov. Evers, together with DATCP, [announced](#) 19 Wisconsin dairy companies received dairy processor grants from DATCP in 2022. As part of the 2021-23 biennial budget, Gov. Evers increased the annual funding for dairy processor grants from \$200,000 to \$400,000. These grants aim to foster innovation, improve profitability, and sustain the long-term viability of Wisconsin's dairy processing facilities. Gov. Evers, together with DATCP, [announced](#) five meat processors received meat processor grants from DATCP in 2022. Funded by the 2021-23 biennial budget, a total of \$200,000 was available for these grants, which aim to grow Wisconsin's meat industry and improve the long-term viability of the state's livestock industry. To kick off June Dairy Month, Gov. Evers [announced](#) up to \$1.5 million in performance-based state tax credits from the WEDC to support a major expansion of Masters Gallery Foods and their state-of-the-art cheese packaging and distribution facility, which is expected to create 105 new jobs.

Investing in Our Infrastructure

Since 2019, according to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), the Evers Administration has improved more than 4,600 miles of roads and highways, including more than 1,700 miles of locally owned roads, and nearly 1,500 bridges. The Wisconsin State Building Commission, which Gov. Evers chairs, approved more than \$764 million in key projects across the state, including the development and design of a new Type 1 Juvenile Correctional Facility in Milwaukee County. In January, Gov. Evers embarked on a rural broadband tour to Reedsburg, Westby, and the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, where he [highlighted](#) six projects that are receiving a total of more than \$23 million in grants to expand high-speed internet to more than 3,400 residential and 200 business locations that are currently unserved or underserved. The projects were funded through the governor's larger investment of \$100 million of ARPA funding, which is providing grants to 83 projects across the state, as [announced](#) in October 2021. In March, Gov. Evers, together with WisDOT, [announced](#) Harbor Assistance Program grants totaling \$9.4 million for six harbor projects in Wisconsin that improve waterborne freight and promote economic development. Later in the year, the governor [announced](#) another \$900,000 Harbor Assistance Program grant for improvements at the Port of Manitowoc, including the construction of new rail

platform extensions at the City Centre LLC property to support the manufacturing, assembly, and shipping of cranes for the U.S. Navy. Gov. Evers and WisDOT announced that the first round of local road funding from the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) will provide \$57.5 million to support 65 projects in communities across the state. Gov. Evers also announced in October that the next cycle of funding from the BIL will provide more than [\\$235 million](#) for more than 150 local road and bridge projects over the next four years. Gov. Evers [announced](#) the Governor's Task Force on Broadband Access released its second annual report, which provided an update on efforts under Gov. Evers and the Evers Administration to expand access, adoption, and affordability of high-speed internet across the state and made recommendations for the state to continue building on this progress. For the third time during his time in office, Gov. Evers went on a statewide "[Pothole Patrol](#)" tour, which included stops in Wausau, Altoona, Racine, Antigo, Sheboygan, Richland Center, and Hudson to repair potholes and discuss the governor's investments in local roads and highways. Gov. Evers [announced](#) a collaboration with three other Midwest governors to build the Lake Michigan Electric Vehicle (EV) Circuit Tour, America's next iconic road trip route specifically for EVs, consisting of a network of EV chargers spanning over 1,100 miles of drivable shoreline around pristine Lake Michigan. Gov. Evers [announced](#) a \$3.75 million investment for infrastructure fixes to support water conservation efforts and safe drinking water for the city of Park Falls. After this announcement, the city withdrew its application from the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin for a major water utility rate increase for Park Falls residents. Gov. Evers and WisDOT [announced](#) nearly \$8 million in grants and loans through the [Freight Railroad Preservation Program](#) and the [Freight Railroad Infrastructure Improvement Program](#) for five freight rail improvement projects across the state. Gov. Evers [joined](#) WisDOT officials and community leaders to celebrate the completion of the Wisconsin Highway 23 (WIS 23) project in Fond du Lac and Sheboygan Counties. While the WIS 23 project was enumerated in 1999, construction did not begin until 2019. Gov. Evers and WisDOT [announced](#) two Transportation Economic Assistance grants in the village of Wrightstown that will allow rail spurs to be built at Alliance Plastics Inc. and Drexel Systems LLC's Wrightstown facilities and add more than 120 local manufacturing jobs. Gov. Evers [announced](#) that the U.S. Department of the Treasury approved the governor's plans to allocate \$40 million in ARPA funds through the Capital Projects Fund to expedite Wisconsin's efforts to expand access to high-speed internet across the state. Gov. Evers, together with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC), [announced](#) the state will receive nearly \$6 million

through the BIL's Internet for All initiative to plan for the deployment and adoption of affordable, equitable, and reliable high-speed internet throughout the state. Under the federal infrastructure law, Wisconsin could expect an allocation of \$700 million to \$1.1 billion for broadband expansion. Thanks to investments in the 2021-23 biennial budget signed by Gov. Evers, the state distributed more than \$515 million in General Transportation Aids to local governments in calendar year 2022 to support transportation-related projects, a two percent increase over calendar year 2021.

Honoring Wisconsin's Veterans

Gov. Evers created a Blue Ribbon Commission on Veteran Opportunity to develop new, innovative initiatives to support the more than 300,000 veterans who live in Wisconsin. Based on the Commission's recommendations, Gov. Evers in October [announced](#) a \$10 million investment to support veteran mental health and suicide prevention services, rental assistance for veterans, county and Tribal veteran service offices, and DWD's Hire Heroes program. Gov. Evers [signed](#) Assembly Bill 720, now [2021 Wisconsin Act 158](#), which provides a pathway for military medical personnel to use their medical skills and training at community-based residential facilities, residential care apartment complexes, and inpatient and outpatient healthcare facilities without having to first obtain a license. Gov. Evers signed Senate Bill 605, now [2021 Wisconsin Act 159](#), allowing active-duty service members, as well as their spouses and children, to receive in-state tuition at University of Wisconsin System and Wisconsin Technical College System institutions if they are relocated from Wisconsin. Gov. Evers and the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) [announced](#) \$549,560 in grants to 14 registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that provide financial assistance, entrepreneurship training, or other services to Wisconsin veterans and their families. Gov. Evers, together with WDVA, [announced](#) that Wisconsin would receive more than \$3 million from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to expand the Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Union Grove.

Promoting a Clean, Sustainable Environment

This year, for the first time in state history, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources developed and implemented administrative rules for new standards regulating certain per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in surface water and drinking water after approval by the Natural Resources Board. These rules went into

effect on Aug. 1, 2022. Using [more than \\$600,000](#) from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the state has helped nearly 150 municipal drinking water systems that have opted into the program, serving more than 1.7 million people. Gov. Evers [released](#) the state's first-ever Clean Energy Plan in April, which outlines efforts to meet the state's carbon-free electricity goal and the carbon-reduction goals of the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement. On Earth Day, Gov. Evers [signed Executive Order #161](#) to create the Office of Environmental Justice at DOA and announced that the Office will work in collaboration with the Office of Sustainability and Clean Energy (OSCE) to facilitate collaboration across state agencies to provide strategies to promote environmentally just policies and prevent disparate outcomes in communities across the state. Wisconsin is the [first state in the Midwest](#) to create a state-level chief resilience officer. After ten years of delays, Gov. Evers [announced](#) the Executive Residence would be moving forward on a project to restore the property's natural shoreline and improve water quality by planting native flowers, grasses, shrubs, and trees. Phase One of this project was completed in October, and Phase Two will be completed in 2023. Gov. Evers [announced](#) more than 9.3 million trees had been planted in Wisconsin since the governor [committed](#) to the [Trillion Tree Pledge](#) in April 2021. Gov. Evers [announced](#) more than \$1.4 million in grants through Wisconsin Coastal Management Program to support economic development, protect Wisconsin shorelines, and create resiliency in Wisconsin's Great Lakes coastal communities. In July, Gov. Evers and Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul [filed](#) a lawsuit against three Wisconsin manufacturers and 15 other defendants for "wrongful, deceptive, and tortious conduct" that led directly to PFAS contamination of Wisconsin's water, property, and natural resources. Gov. Evers [announced](#) more than \$4.5 million in funding to advance projects across Wisconsin of significant importance to several communities, conservation and natural resource protection, and the state's multi-billion-dollar outdoor recreation economy. Gov. Evers [announced](#) in August that the Wisconsin PFAS Action Council had released its 2022 PFAS Action Plan Progress Report, which provides updates on actions to address PFAS by the Evers Administration to date, as well as recommendations for continued, future action. In April, Gov. Evers [signed Assembly Bill 727](#), now 2021 Wisconsin Act 223, which allows DATCP to create a commercial nitrogen optimization pilot program and a crop insurance premium rebate program and creates a full-time hydrogeologist project position within the UW System focused on developing groundwater resource information. In August, [Gov. Evers and DATCP celebrated](#) the release of \$2.4 million from the Joint Finance Committee to fund the nitrogen optimization program and the cover crop insurance premium rebate program. These two initiatives will work in

tandem to further conservation efforts of Wisconsin's soil and water resources. Part of a [\\$10 million commitment](#) to improve drinking water quality for private well owners across the state, Gov. Evers [announced](#) the new ARPA Well Compensation and Well Abandonment Grant Programs began providing expanded financial assistance to well owners to support the replacement, reconstruction, treatment, or abandonment of contaminated private wells. Gov. Evers was recognized by the [US Water Alliance](#) as a winner of this year's [US Water Prize](#) in the Outstanding Public Official category for his efforts to promote and protect water quality in Wisconsin. Recognizing the immense clean energy potential of hydrogen, Gov. Evers announced Wisconsin's partnership in the creation of two regional, multi-state clean hydrogen hubs—the [Midwestern Hydrogen Coalition](#) and the [Heartland Hydrogen Hub](#)—to identify opportunities for advancing clean hydrogen production and use in the region. Gov. Evers [announced](#) 72 community transportation projects across the state would receive federal funding over the next five years through WisDOT's Transportation Alternatives Program to help create or enhance opportunities for safe non-motorized transportation, such as bike and pedestrian walking paths. Gov. Evers, together with the DNR, [announced](#) the start of a PFAS-containing firefighting foam waste collection and disposal program, which will collect and dispose of at least 25,000 gallons of PFAS-containing firefighting foam waste from fire departments throughout Wisconsin. Gov. Evers and the DNR [announced](#) the launch of the [PFAS Interactive Data Viewer](#), which is a new tool to understand how PFAS are impacting Wisconsin's lands and waters. Both of these programs were recommendations made by the Wisconsin PFAS Action Council in the [PFAS Action Plan](#), which was released in 2020. Gov. Evers, along with the EPA and the DNR, [announced](#) new federal funding to support municipal investments in wastewater and drinking water infrastructure, including an additional \$79 million for the existing State Revolving Loan Fund program and \$64 million for lead service line replacement and addressing emerging contaminants like PFAS. Gov. Evers [announced](#) his nomination of a multi-component site in the bay of Green Bay for inclusion in the National Estuarine Research Reserve System, a national network of 30 sites across the coastal United States and the Great Lakes designed to protect and study estuaries and their coastal wetlands.

Building Strong, Thriving, and Equitable Communities

Gov. Evers [announced](#) more than \$82 million in grants through the Equitable Recovery Grant Program that were awarded to support community-based organizations from Beloit to Lac du Flambeau working to increase equity and

eliminate disparities in communities disproportionately affected by the pandemic statewide. Part of the more than \$230 million [Neighborhood Investment Fund grant program](#), Gov. Evers [announced](#) \$15 million for the city of Milwaukee and \$10.5 million for Milwaukee County to support community development projects. Gov. Evers [announced](#) the city of Beloit will receive a \$9 million [Neighborhood Investment Fund grant](#) to help with the development of a community outreach and engagement center at Beloit College to find solutions to complex community problems by fostering collaboration between partnerships that exist between Beloit College and the School District of Beloit, Beloit Health System, the Boys & Girls Club, Acts Housing, Community Action, and the NAACP, among others. Gov. Evers [announced](#) the city of Madison will receive \$6 million, and Dane County will receive nearly \$15 million as part of the [Neighborhood Investment Fund grant program](#). These funds will be used for community development projects that expand affordable housing, bolster economic, social, and cultural opportunities, and support business development and entrepreneurship. Gov. Evers [announced](#) the cities of Rice Lake, Altoona, Menomonie, and Eau Claire will receive more than \$8 million as part of the [Neighborhood Investment Fund grant program](#) to support projects that will improve downtown infrastructure and pedestrian safety, promote business development initiatives, and support local affordable housing and shelter needs. Gov. Evers [announced](#) the Interagency Council on Homelessness, which is chaired by the governor, unanimously adopted and released their “[Welcoming Wisconsin Home](#)” report. Gov. Evers [announced](#) several additional recipients for the Neighborhood Investment Fund grant program, including \$3.6 million for the city of Fond du Lac, more than \$2 million for the city of Menasha, more than \$4.3 million for the city of Neenah, and more than \$10 million for Winnebago County to support an array of proposals that address local housing needs, improvements to a local senior care facility, and a comprehensive community redevelopment initiative. Gov. Evers also [announced](#) several Neighborhood Investment Fund recipients in Brown County, including \$5 million for the city of Green Bay to support new housing opportunities and a multi-purpose community development site and \$4.7 million for the village of Ashwaubenon to support the development of an affordable housing initiative. Gov. Evers [invested](#) \$15 million from the Neighborhood Investment Fund for Brown County to redevelop facilities at the old Pulliam Power Plant site to allow for the long-awaited relocation of the C. Reiss coal piles. In February, DHS [awarded](#) \$3.4 million in Community Outreach Grants to 43 organizations to promote health equity in COVID-19 vaccinations in Wisconsin. Gov. Evers [announced](#) more than \$17.2 million in Community Development Block Grant Housing awards were provided to regional housing

authorities across the state. These funds will help low- and moderate-income families in Wisconsin purchase a home or make critical repairs to their homes. Gov. Evers [announced](#) an \$8 million grant to support Wisconsinites who need legal assistance to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Gov. Evers [announced](#) a \$5 million investment to help establish Concordia 27, a project which will convert a vacant building on Milwaukee's Near West Side into a multi-faceted community center with a particular focus on addressing community challenges, including health disparities, food insecurity, unemployment, and affordable housing. In May, DHS [announced](#) the [Moving Forward Together Grant Program](#), a funding opportunity to support continued efforts to promote health equity in COVID-19 vaccination in Wisconsin. The Moving Forward Together Grant Program aims to support organizations in providing health education and access to COVID-19 vaccinations. In celebration of Pride Month, Gov. Evers [signed](#) Executive Order #166, ordering that the Progress Pride Flag be raised over the Wisconsin State Capitol, marking the first year the Progress Pride Flag was flown and the fourth year a Pride Flag was flown over the State Capitol. Gov. Evers [signed](#) Executive Order #169, raising the Juneteenth Flag over the Wisconsin State Capitol in celebration of Juneteenth for the third year in a row. Gov. Evers, together with the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority, [announced](#) that developers of affordable multifamily housing projects across Wisconsin would receive \$32.4 million to help fill financing gaps caused by rising construction costs, interest rate increases, and supply chain delays. Gov. Evers, together with WEDC, [announced](#) the city of Waukesha would be receiving a \$250,000 Community Development Investment Grant from WEDC to support an expansion project at the Waukesha Civic Theatre designed to spur cultural growth and bring more visitors to the downtown area. DHS [received](#) approval from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to provide housing support for low-income Wisconsin families in need. Gov. Evers, together with the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin and WisDOT, [unveiled](#) new dual-language signs for placement on state highways indicating the Menominee Nation's Tribal boundaries and other landmarks in both English and the Menominee Language. Gov. Evers [vetoed](#) numerous bills that would have made it harder for eligible voters, including voters with disabilities, to cast their ballot and created hurdles for local officials in administering elections fairly and securely.

An online version of this release is available [here](#).