

WMC: Disappointed in Gov. Evers' decision to veto bill that would expand educational opportunities for families

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MADISON – Wisconsin Manufactures & Commerce (WMC) – the combined state chamber and manufacturers' association – expressed frustration and disappointment with Gov. Tony Evers' decision to veto [Assembly Bill 970](#). The governor vetoed the bill on Friday that would have expanded educational opportunities for students and their families throughout the state.

AB 970 would remove family income and pupil participation limits for school choice, while creating an education reimbursement program – sometimes called a micro-education savings account – for public school students.

WMC Director of Workforce, Education and Employment Policy Rachel Ver Velde [testified](#) in favor of the bill during its public hearing because today's students are tomorrow's workers. Unfortunately, as public school funding has increased over the last five state budgets, educational outcomes have not improved statewide. In fact, only one-third of Wisconsin students are proficient at grade level in math and language arts.

"It is shocking that Gov. Evers would veto such an important piece of legislation for Wisconsin's students. State report cards clearly showed that choice schools on average in Milwaukee and Racine are performing at twice the proficiency levels as public schools in these areas," said Ver Velde. "This legislation would have created opportunities for students throughout Wisconsin to have better outcomes and access to innovative education."

Gov. Evers's veto will limit parents' ability to find the best education for their child, resulting in students who may lack the necessary skills to be successful upon graduation. With a severe workforce shortage, it is even more critical for businesses

to have future employees with basic competencies and skills for the workplace. “Employers want students to have access to the best schools and an ability to partake in educational options that are the best fit for students and their families. Too often students are denied this opportunity and are forced into a one-size-fits-all system,” added Ver Velde. “Additionally, under this bill, students in the public schools would have had access to dollars to help supplement their education with additional courses or materials. Unfortunately, the governor stopped this innovation that would have driven failing schools and the education establishment to improve outcomes across the board. In effect, Gov. Evers’ action today let down children and families – sentencing far too many young people to failure.”
AB 970 passed 20-11 in the Senate and 59-34 in the Assembly.