

Gov. Evers: Signs bills to address carjacking and reckless driving in Wisconsin

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MILWAUKEE — Gov. Tony Evers today signed two bills that would help address reckless driving and carjacking in the state by increasing penalties for both and creating a new “carjacking” section of the criminal code.

“Reckless driving and other dangerous behaviors are putting our kids, families, and communities at risk all across our state, and we must do more at the state level to address dangerous behavior on our roads,” said Gov. Evers. “I’m proud the first enacted bill of my second term was aimed at curbing reckless driving, and I am glad to be continuing that work today by signing these bills to address carjacking and ensure reckless driving is treated with the seriousness it requires.”

[In April](#), Gov. Evers also signed [Senate Bill 92](#), now 2023 Wisconsin Act 1, to curb reckless driving in Wisconsin by allowing counties and municipalities to enact ordinances authorizing law enforcement to impound a vehicle if its owner is cited for reckless driving, has a prior conviction for reckless driving, and has not paid the imposed forfeiture for that offense.

[Assembly Bill 55](#), now 2023 Wisconsin Act 9:

- Increases the penalties for reckless driving; and
- Requires that the driver improvement surcharge and safe ride surcharge are imposed on anyone convicted of reckless driving.

[Senate Bill 76](#), now 2023 Wisconsin Act 10:

- Reorganizes the crimes of intentionally taking a vehicle without the owner’s

consent;

- Creates a new “carjacking” section of the criminal code; and
- Increases certain penalties related to carjacking crimes.

“These bills are a good place to start, but our work cannot stop here,” continued Gov. Evers. “I am once again urging the Legislature to support my budget initiatives that build upon the legislation I’m signing today to combat reckless driving across our state. I look forward to further discussions to make our roads and communities safer by taking a statewide, multi-pronged approach on this critically important issue.”

These actions build on previous and ongoing efforts of the Evers Administration to address reckless driving, reduce crime, and increase safety on Wisconsin’s roads, including the governor’s 2023-25 biennial budget proposal, which would:

- Improve the safety of travel on Wisconsin’s highways by providing 35.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions for additional state troopers and 10.0 FTE positions for motor carrier inspectors;
- Provide \$16,000 to develop and implement electric vehicle license plate stickers to assist first responders in emergency response for electric vehicles;
- Restore roadway design considerations in state law that support non-motorist infrastructure known as “Complete Streets,” empowering local communities to safely integrate all modes of transportation; and
- Invest \$6.5 million to cover the cost of comprehensive driver education for economically disadvantaged students.

Unfortunately, last week, the Joint Committee on Finance met in its first executive session of the budget process and in a single motion removed more than 540 provisions from the governor’s budget, including several additional provisions to make roads safer, such as:

- Providing \$60 million to establish a new traffic calming grant program;
- Implementing Driver Licenses for All, regardless of documented status, to improve the safety of Wisconsin roads for everyone in Wisconsin;
- Requiring that courts order the use of an ignition interlock device (IID) for all offenses involving the use of alcohol and operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated, joining 30 other states and D.C. in requiring all offenders, including first-time offenders, to install an IID; and
- Increasing Wisconsin’s seatbelt violation penalty from \$10 to \$25 to match

neighboring states.

In addition to his 2023-25 biennial budget proposals, Gov. Evers has previously announced [more than \\$100 million](#) in investments to support violence prevention and community safety efforts statewide, including to support the work of local and Tribal law enforcement across the state and, notably, to prevent reckless driving through environmental design and upgrades to local roads in Milwaukee.