

Joan Ballweg: Senate Successfully Overrides Vetoes

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Wisconsin's constitution affords the governor with the most powerful veto pen in the United States. The constitution also affords the legislature power to override a governor's veto. A successful veto override requires a two-thirds vote by both the Wisconsin State Senate and Assembly.

Since Wisconsin was granted statehood, governors have only fully vetoed legislation presented to them at a rate of 3.7 percent. Between 1848 and 2022, the Wisconsin State Legislature has passed 51,575 bills, and governors of the state have only fully vetoed 1,927 of those. Governor Evers has set records for the number of vetoes he has issued while in office. During his first legislative session as governor, he fully vetoed 126 bills. That's a veto rate of 32 percent!

This September, the Senate made its mark on state history by successfully overriding three of the governor's vetoes. Previous to this legislative session, the state legislature successfully overrode 83 full vetoes, but there have been no successful veto overrides in the 21st Century.

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The senate successfully overrode the governor's full veto of Senate Bill 49. This legislation protects the right of individuals to use natural gas to power their appliances. The senate also overrode partial vetoes made to the 2023-25 Wisconsin State Budget.

The biennial budget, created and passed by the legislature, returned money from the state's surplus to all Wisconsin taxpayers in proportion to what they paid into

the state. Passing this tax cut was the legislature following through on our commitment to lessen your tax burden. Governor Evers made a similar promise to Wisconsinites, but went back on his commitment and vetoed the state's largest income tax cut of all time, with a total value of over \$3 billion. This September, the Wisconsin State Senate overrode that veto to return this money to hardworking Wisconsinites.

One of the most egregious vetoes made by Governor Evers in biennial budget will raise property taxes until 2425. Without being overridden, this 400-year veto will increase property taxes by and estimated \$780 million in the 2025-27 biennium alone! The senate used the super-majority, granted to us by Wisconsin voters, to undo the governor's irresponsible vetoes.

While the state senate has successfully overridden these vetoes, both houses must act. These overrides have now moved to the Wisconsin State Assembly. The last time a full or partial veto was successfully overridden was the 1985 legislative session.

-Ballweg, R-Markesan, is Senate Majority Caucus vice-chair. She represent the 14th Senate District.