

Gov. Evers: Releases 2026 State of the State Address excerpts

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers, set to deliver his eighth and final State of the State address tonight, today released excerpts from his 2026 State of the State address. The governor will deliver his State of the State address tonight, Tues., Feb. 17, 2026, at 7 p.m. CT. The governor's State of the State address will be livestreamed on his [YouTube channel](#) and [Facebook page](#) for members of the public.

The address will highlight Gov. Evers' and the Evers Administration's efforts and successes over the past seven years to do what's best for kids and invest in education at every level, build the 21st-century infrastructure Wisconsin needs to support a 21st-century economy and workforce, uplift the state's farmers, producers, and agricultural industries, expand access to affordable housing, lower everyday out-of-pocket costs for Wisconsinites and working families, bolster key industries across the state, including tourism and outdoor recreation, and more. Gov. Evers is also expected to make several announcements and detail key policy priorities in his address tonight.

Excerpts from the Gov. Evers' 2026 State of the State address as prepared for delivery are available below:

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"I know many lawmakers are antsy to end the legislative session and pack up to get back on the campaign trail. [...]"

"Folks, I know many of you are up for election, but here's the deal: after years of delivering historic, bipartisan wins for our state, Wisconsinites have high expectations for the work we can do together over the next ten months—and they

should. Just look at what we've accomplished over the last seven years.

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"My vetoes are often the focus of news coverage and even political criticism. [...]
But here's the truth: I've signed over 800 bills as governor, and more than 97 percent of the bills I've signed passed with bipartisan support.

"Here are just a few of those bipartisan bills. We improved our justice system, bolstered support for public defenders and DAs, and made the largest addition of circuit court branches in over two decades. We made sure firefighters and law enforcement officers can access workers' compensation for post-traumatic stress. We created a holiday honoring Hmong-Lao Veterans, and our kids now learn about Hmong and Asian American history in school. We fixed gaps in the AMBER Alert System through the Prince Act so we can locate missing kids faster. And, folks, this is all barely a fraction of the more than 800 bills I've been proud to sign as governor.

"We expanded tax credits to help lower the cost of child care for working families. We made it so State Park passes can be used for 12 full months, regardless of when it's purchased. We provided Medicaid coverage for telehealth services so folks can access healthcare right at home. We supported peer-to-peer suicide prevention efforts for kids in schools. We invested in helping local communities prepare for and prevent flooding before disaster happens. And we worked together to keep Major League Baseball in Milwaukee until 2050, so future generations of Wisconsin's kids will grow up rooting for the Brewers like so many of us have.

"We've also managed to do all of this important work while still saving where we could and paying down our state's debt. We've saved taxpayers over \$600 million by paying off about \$3 billion of our state's debt. After 30 consecutive years of our state's check account running a deficit, we've ended every fiscal year I've been governor with a positive balance.

"Thanks to our bipartisan efforts to cut taxes, Wisconsin taxpayers will see over \$2 billion in tax relief annually, with most of those cuts going to the middle class. And I not only kept my campaign promise to Wisconsinites that I'd deliver a 10-percent tax cut for middle-class families. In fact, middle-class taxpayers have seen an income tax cut of 23 percent—more than double what I promised. Wisconsinites, you're keeping more of your hard-earned money today than at any point in the last

50 years.

“I’m also grateful the Legislature supported a key part of my affordability plan last year to help lower monthly energy costs for working families. Because of our bipartisan work, Wisconsinites are no longer paying sales tax on utility bills, which is expected to save Wisconsin households over \$178 million over the next two years.

“Not only are Wisconsinites keeping more of their hard-earned money, Wisconsinites are making more money, too. Average annual wages in Wisconsin went up nearly 26 percent over my first six years in office, and median wages in 2024 reached an all-time record high.

...

“Another important priority for us over the last seven years has been addressing the workforce challenges that have plagued our state for generations. We’ve been working to build the 21st-century workforce Wisconsin needs to compete in a 21st-century economy.

“We’ve reduced barriers to joining our workforce by investing in child care slots for working parents and making sure they can get to and from work. We’ve helped over 127,000 Wisconsin workers get career and skills training thanks to investments I directed. Wisconsin’s seen record-high employment and record-low unemployment, and we’ve had the highest ever enrollment in our youth and registered apprenticeship programs ever in state history for several years in a row. And by cracking down on worker misclassification, we’ve made sure over 134,000 workers got the wages and benefits they were owed.

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“With all of the success we’ve had over the last seven years, Wisconsinites are eager for us to continue our progress. We can’t afford for lawmakers to lose focus on the future we’ve been working hard to build together just because it’s an election year. So, I know the Legislature would rather hit the road and take the rest of the year off, but I’m going to ask lawmakers to stick around until our work here is finished.

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“I wish Republican lawmakers would’ve been willing to do more during the Year of

the Kid to help keep our kids, families, and communities safe. I was really disappointed that, for all of the rhetoric about who cares about crime and who doesn't, Republicans voted against my proposal making the Wisconsin Office of Violence Prevention permanent. We could be doing so much more to address domestic and intimate partner violence, for example. These statistics get me really wound up. Domestic violence homicides in Wisconsin jumped by 20 percent between 2021 and 2022. 20 percent. We hit a new record high of 96 Wisconsinites murdered in domestic and intimate partner violence incidents. That record only lasted until 2024, when 99 Wisconsinites were killed.

"Folks, this trend is headed in the wrong direction. Yet, on top of voting not to make the Wisconsin Office of Violence Prevention permanent last year, Republican lawmakers also voted against my request to provide \$66 million for Victims of Crime Act programs, many of which help survivors of domestic violence and their families get back on their feet.

"I urge the Legislature to send bills to my desk to codify the Office of Violence Prevention and fund Victims of Crime Act programs. Do the right thing and get this done.

...

"I'm not a rocket scientist, but I did teach biology in Baraboo. Maybe if we want to make Americans and Wisconsinites "healthy" again, making healthcare affordable and accessible would be a great place to start.

...

"Wisconsin is as purple as ever, but we've shown we can put politics aside and work together to get good things done. Compared to all of the chaos, dysfunction, and recklessness in Washington, here in Wisconsin, we've worked to lead by example. And a big part of that is the fact that, today, lawmakers are elected under the fair maps I signed into law."

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