

Gov. Evers: Sends letter to Wisconsin Congressional delegation urging immediate modification to new federal hemp laws

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New federal law banning the sale of virtually all intoxicating hemp products in the U.S. by November 2026 projected to jeopardize \$700 million in economic impact and nearly 3,500 jobs in Wisconsin

MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers sent a letter to every member of Wisconsin's Congressional delegation urging immediate legislative action to revise the new federal hemp law, which banned the sale of most hemp products in the U.S. starting in November 2026 and was passed as part of the plan to reopen the federal government last year after the longest federal government shutdown in U.S. history. Without immediate action, the new federal hemp law is projected to jeopardize \$700 million in economic impact and nearly 3,500 jobs in Wisconsin, as well as the growing sector of legitimate hemp businesses and producers across the state.

The new federal definition sets the legal limit of THC in final hemp-derived cannabinoid products at 0.4 milligrams per container, ultimately causing many existing lawful products to be reclassified in a manner that effectively eliminates existing business models, forcing closures, layoffs, and lost investment. The impacts of the new federal hemp bill will be further intensified in Wisconsin due to the fact that Wisconsin has not yet legalized medical or recreational marijuana, despite multiple attempts by Gov. Evers to do so.

The agricultural impacts of this new regulation in Wisconsin are equally concerning.

The growing of hemp has become a strong diversification option for Wisconsin farmers, and as of November 2025, Wisconsin had 470 federally licensed hemp producers. Without timely federal legislative action, Wisconsin producers may be forced to abandon hemp cultivation altogether, resulting in lost income and diminished economic opportunities, especially in rural communities.

In his letter, Gov. Evers urges Wisconsin's Congressional delegation to work with their congressional colleagues to pursue a legislative solution that maintains a workable, science-based hemp definition that prevents unnecessary economic harm.

A copy of the governors' letter to Wisconsin's Congressional delegation is available [here](#). A transcript of the letter is available below.

Dear Duly Elected Members of Congress:

I write today to urge your immediate attention and action regarding the new federal hemp definition scheduled to take effect in November 2026. Without legislative modification, this change will have significant implications for Wisconsin hemp farmers, processors, retailers, and our broader economy.

Hemp-derived products currently support a growing sector of legitimate businesses across Wisconsin, employing nearly 3,500 employees and contributing meaningfully to local economies with over \$700 million in economic production. Under the new federal definition, which would set the legal limit of THC in final hemp derived cannabinoid products at 0.4 milligrams per container, many of these existing lawful products would be reclassified in a manner that effectively eliminates existing business models, forcing closures, layoffs, and lost investment.

The agricultural impacts are equally concerning. Farmers, who have been the backbone of Wisconsin's culture and economy for generations, must make planting decisions well in advance of each growing season, often committing seed, land, equipment, labor, and financing months before harvest. The growing of hemp has become a strong diversification option for Wisconsin farmers, and as of November 2025, Wisconsin had 470 federally licensed hemp producers. Regulatory uncertainty surrounding the definition of hemp undermines their ability to plan responsibly and threatens to disrupt crop selection, with the potential to leave fields sitting idle for the 2026 season and beyond. Without timely federal legislative

action, Wisconsin producers may be forced to abandon hemp cultivation altogether, resulting in lost income and diminished economic opportunities, especially in our rural communities. Our farmers already deal with enough, and the constant chaos and confusion out of D.C. caused by reckless trade wars and erratic tariff taxes continues to make an already strenuous job even harder. State and federal leadership must not turn its back on the farming communities and families who have long been, and always will be, the bedrock of our nation's continued success.

These impacts are further intensified by the fact that Wisconsin has not enacted legislation legalizing medical or recreational marijuana, despite multiple attempts by my administration to do so. While consumer demand for hemp-derived products remains strong, the absence of a legalized marijuana market in Wisconsin means that many of these products serve as lawful alternatives for Wisconsinites and an important source of revenue for in-state businesses. Restrictive changes to the hemp definition will only drive commerce for hemp-derived products across state lines, shifting jobs and tax revenue away from Wisconsin.

Due to the unique situation Wisconsin is left in, outlined above, I strongly believe federal legislation is needed to prevent the negative impacts of the new federal hemp definition. I respectfully request that you work with your congressional colleagues to pursue a legislative solution that maintains a workable, science-based hemp definition that prevents unnecessary economic harm. At the very least, I urge you to support federal legislation to delay the effective date of the new federal hemp definition by an additional two years, such as S. 3686, the Hemp Planting Predictability Act. A longer implementation timeline would provide farmers and their families and small businesses with the certainty and flexibility needed to adjust operations, make responsible planting decisions, and avoid abrupt economic disruptions. This is about preserving lawful agricultural production that supports our local farmers and producers, protecting small businesses, and ensuring regulatory clarity for an industry that Congress itself created through prior legislation.

Time is of the essence. Farmers, producers, and retailers need certainty now in order to make informed decisions for the 2026 growing season and beyond. I urge you to act promptly to protect Wisconsin's agricultural producers, small businesses, and workforce.

Respectfully,



Tony Evers
Governor

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