

Institute for Reforming Government: Releases “Wisconsin Administrative Reform Toolbox” as playbook for states seeking to replicate Wisconsin’s model

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Delafield, Wis. - The Institute for Reforming Government (IRG) released its “[Wisconsin Administrative Reform Toolbox](#)” on Monday, a practical handbook designed to help other states replicate Wisconsin’s reform framework.

WHY IT MATTERS:

In the 2010s, Wisconsin led one of the nation’s most sustained efforts to restore legislative authority over unelected bureaucracies. By documenting and organizing this framework, IRG reinforces Wisconsin’s leadership, while helping other states adopt tested reforms rather than starting from scratch.

THE REPORT:

The Toolbox builds on IRG’s 2025 report, *Wisconsin’s Administrative Revolution: Lessons from the REINS Act*, which provided the first empirical review of Wisconsin’s 2017 REINS reform. That analysis found the law strengthened oversight of high-cost regulations and slowed the growth of major rules. The new report moves from analysis to application — organizing Wisconsin’s reforms into seven clear legislative tools that can be adapted nationwide.

WISCONSIN’S PLAYBOOK:

- **2011 Act 21** – Requires explicit statutory authority and economic impact

analysis before agencies regulate.

- **2017 Act 39** - Imposes a 30-month deadline to prevent stalled or indefinite rulemaking.
- **2017 Act 57 (REINS)** - Requires legislative approval for rules costing \$10 million or more over two years.
- **2017 Act 108** - Creates a process to repeal unauthorized or obsolete rules.
- **2017 Act 369** - Ends judicial deference to agency interpretations and strengthens legislative oversight.

THE QUOTE:

“Wisconsin didn’t just debate administrative reform — we enacted it,” said Jake Curtis, IRG General Counsel and Director of the Center for Investigative Oversight. “Over more than a decade, lawmakers built a durable framework. This Toolbox provides a blueprint for states ready to do the same.”

WHAT’S NEXT IN WISCONSIN

- **Regulatory Budget (AB 277 model)** - Would require cost offsets for new regulations to prevent cumulative regulatory growth.
- **Sunset Review (AB 274 model)** - Would require periodic reauthorization of administrative code chapters to prevent permanent, unreviewed mandates (Both bills recently **passed** the Legislature and are awaiting Governor Evers’ signature/veto)

WHAT’S NEXT IN OTHER STATES::

Wisconsin’s reforms from the early 2010s remain among the most comprehensive in the country. They reshaped rulemaking in Wisconsin and strengthened accountability to taxpayers and businesses. The Toolbox ensures that experience can now inform reform efforts across the nation — while strengthening the case for protecting these gains here at home.



[Read the Toolbox](#)



[Read the 2025 REINS Report](#)