

Vos won't seek reelection

Posted on Thursday, Feb 19, 2026

Robin Vos, the longest-serving Assembly speaker in Wisconsin history, announced he won't seek reelection.

His voice cracking at times, Vos announced at the outset of Thursday's Assembly floor period that he had been considering retirement for much of last year. The final sign it was time to retire was a heart attack he had in mid-November, he said.

Vos called his 14 years as speaker the greatest professional honor of his life. He eclipsed the eight years Dem Tom Loftus served as speaker at the start of the 2021-22 session.

"Like most of you, I did not arrive with a grand plan to stay for 22 years. I arrived with the belief that this institution matters and a healthy respect for the fact that the people who sent me here expected me to take the job seriously, even when it was hard, unpopular or lonely," Vos said as he was overcome with emotion.

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

Vos, 57, was first elected to the Assembly in 2004. He became co-chair of the Joint Finance Committee in 2011, helping shepherd Gov. Scott Walker's Act 10 through the budget committee, and then rose to speaker in 2013.

He was both a driving force behind some of the biggest conservative reforms in Wisconsin over the past two decades and a divisive figure even within his own base.

Vos oversaw the largest GOP majority in the Assembly since the 1957-58 session at 64 members in 2017-18 and 2023-24 under what critics decried as gerrymandered maps to benefit Republicans.

Vos had a falling out with President Donald Trump over the speaker's refusal to try rescinding Wisconsin's electoral votes for Joe Biden after the 2020 election, even

though legal experts said there was no mechanism to do so. Republican activists at the 2022 state GOP convention pushed a resolution calling for Vos' removal that was shot down, while two recall attempts against him in 2024 failed.

Many believed Vos planned to retire ahead of the 2024 election but reversed course after the attempts to recall him.

Vos said he took his heart attack as a sign from God that it was time to choose a different path.

"Luckily, my doctor said I'm perfectly fine, but I do need to reduce my stress, and let me tell you, this job is stressful," Vos said.

Vos will serve out the remainder of his term and urged his colleagues to ensure the legislative branch remains strong.

"I will miss many of you, but not all of you," Vos joked.

Though he frequently clashed with Vos, Dem Gov. Tony Evers said he was grateful to have served as governor during the speaker's tenure.

"Although we've disagreed more often than we didn't, I respect his candor, his ability to navigate complex policies and conversations, and his unrivaled passion for politics," Evers said.