



September 1, 2023



Assembly Republicans Unveil Almost \$3 Billion Tax Cut Package Targeting Middle Class

On August 29, 2023, Assembly Republicans unveiled an **almost \$3 billion tax cut package**, citing it was a chance for Governor Tony Evers to “do the right thing” after a larger reduction included in the state budget was vetoed earlier this summer.

According to Assembly Republicans, the plan would use the state's surplus to cut income taxes for Wisconsin's third tax bracket from 5.3 to 4.4 percent starting in tax year 2023. That affects individuals with \$27,630 to \$304,170 in annual taxable income or joint filers making between \$36,840 to \$405,550.

Joint Committee on Finance Co-Chair Mark Born (R-Beaver Dam) stated, “The third bracket is a large bracket, but it's clearly where the middle class of Wisconsin is.”

In addition, the new bill also would expand tax cuts for retirees who are at least 67 years old. It includes a tax exemption for retirement income up to \$100,000 for individuals or up to \$150,000 for joint married filers.

A **memo released by the governor's budget director** on Monday, August 28, 2023 warned that Wisconsin could be in danger of losing federal pandemic relief funds if it

cuts tax revenue too steeply. Born said Tuesday he's not worried that the proposed \$2.9 billion in state tax cuts would lead to American Rescue Plan Act money being recouped.

Republicans also introduced a **joint resolution on August 29, 2023** that would make it more difficult to raise taxes in Wisconsin. Under the proposed constitutional amendment, approval by a two-thirds majority of both chambers of the state Legislature would be needed to raise income, sales or franchise taxes.

The Assembly Ways and Means Committee held a public hearing on Wednesday, August 30, 2023 on the **tax cut** and **constitutional amendment**.

Governor Evers Calls Special Session on Child Care

After the legislature rejected Governor Evers' proposals to invest more than \$1 billion in child care initiatives in the state budget, the Governor has now called for a September Special Session of the legislature to reconsider.

Past attempts by the Governor to call the legislature into special session on items including abortion, gun control, and taxes have resulted in the legislature simply gaveling in and gaveling out of session without debate.

While this call for a special session is likely to suffer the same fate as past attempts, legislators are currently working on their own initiatives expected to be released in the coming weeks aimed at alleviating the child care shortage.

State Legislature Returns to Session this Month

Following a several month summer "recess," the Wisconsin State Legislature is scheduled to return this month. The legislature has a floorperiod from September 12-21, 2023 and is expected to meet a couple of times during the window.

Major items potentially to be considered during the floorperiod include veto override attempts of Governor Evers' budget vetoes and a potential vote on the Milwaukee Brewers stadium funding.



Wisconsin Front and Center of 2024 Election

If there was any doubt surrounding whether Wisconsin would continue to be the epicenter of national politics in 2024, events of the past month only reaffirm Wisconsin's importance come November of next year.

Not only did last month see visits from the President, Vice President, and First Lady, but the state played host to the first Republican presidential primary debate of the year.

Couple the state's recent popularity among presidential hopefuls with the Republican National Convention coming to Milwaukee next summer (July 15-18, 2024) and all signs indicate the path to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue running directly through the Badger State.

Four Bipartisan Task Forces Created in State Assembly; Artificial Intelligence a Focus of Both the Governor and Legislature

Wisconsin State Assembly Speaker Robin Vos (R-Rochester) recently announced the creation of four new bipartisan task forces. Each task force is led by an Assembly Republican as chair and an Assembly Democrat as Vice Chair.

The four task forces include:

- The Speaker's Task Force on Artificial Intelligence
- The Speaker's Task Force on Childhood Obesity
- The Speaker's Task Force on Truancy in K-12 Education
- The Speaker's Task Force on Human Trafficking.

Governor Evers is also bringing additional attention to the artificial intelligence issue as he issued an Executive Order creating the Governor's Task Force on Workforce and Artificial Intelligence.

Boardman Named New WisDOT Deputy Secretary

In August, Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) Secretary Craig Thompson named Kristina Boardman deputy secretary of the department.

Boardman is the first female deputy secretary at WisDOT and joins the leadership team following her role as administrator of WisDOT's Division of Motor Vehicles, a position she held since 2016. In addition, Boardman recently served as board chair of the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA). She replaces former Deputy Secretary Paul Hammer, who left the position for deputy secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Administration.



DNR Announces Revised Wolf Management Plan

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) recently issued a revised **draft** of its 2023 Wolf Management Plan. The plan, scheduled to go before the Natural Resource Board in October, is an update to the initial management plan released by the department in November 2022.

The plan, which is generally one of the most politically controversial plans released by DNR, received mixed reviews from stakeholders with opponents arguing the plan should include an overall population goal for the Wisconsin wolf population. You can review the plan **by clicking here**.

Questions?

As always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Eric J. Petersen or Kyle Christianson via email or at 608.256.5223.



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