

Governor Evers Signs Biennial Budget Bill into Law

Borgerding applauds bipartisan support of hospital and physician investments

In a ceremony in the state capitol on July 5, Gov. Tony Evers signed into law a biennial state budget that includes over \$350 million in reimbursement increases for hospitals and health systems, along with millions of dollars in investments for physician, registered nurses and allied health professional training grants.

"The Wisconsin Hospital Association appreciates the bipartisan leadership of Governor Evers, Republican co-chairs of the Joint Finance Committee and individual lawmakers that championed specific policies, in putting forward and approving a strong health care budget for Wisconsin," said WHA President and CEO Borgerding in a [press release](#) following the bill signing ceremony.

"While the cost of caring for patients in hospitals has risen well above the rate of general inflation, reimbursement from private insurance companies and government programs have failed to keep pace. This imbalance between revenues and expenses is a dangerous trend for any organization, but particularly for hospitals as they care for everyone who comes to their doors; concerns we have been communicating to the governor and lawmakers for nearly a year," said Borgerding. "The Wisconsin Hospital Association applauds the bipartisan response to these concerns in this budget."

This action by Gov. Evers follows months of deliberation by the Legislature and the [state's budget-writing Joint Finance Committee](#). The committee completed its work on June 22 and shepherded a budget bill that was approved by the state Legislature the following week.

"Our hospitals, our nursing homes are key elements of our communities," said Sen. Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green) during a press conference held prior to the budget committee's last day of action on the state budget. "They've gone through a lot of challenging times over the last three years with the COVID pandemic, and they need our support."

While the governor approved strong investments in Medicaid reimbursement for hospitals and health systems, he also used his line-item veto authority to increase a fee assessed on hospitals to fund the state newborn screening program. The action requires the Wisconsin Department of Health Services to promulgate a rule that imposes a newborn screening fee on a hospital of no less than \$195 per card, which is currently \$109 per card.

WHA will share relevant information about provisions in the budget, including reimbursement increases for hospitals and providers, as information becomes available.

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