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2025-2026 Legislative Session

League Summary of Legislation of Municipal Importance

Bills Introduced April 14 to April 25

- **Senate Bill (SB) 220: Requirements for Persons Circulating Nomination Papers** - Sen. Wanggaard (R-Racine) and Rep. Piwowarczyk (R-Hubertus) - Under current law, for a person to circulate nomination papers for a candidate for office, that person must be eligible to vote in Wisconsin or be a U.S. citizen 18 years of age or older who would not be disqualified from voting in Wisconsin if they were a resident. This legislation requires that any person circulating nomination papers or a recall petition must be eligible to vote in Wisconsin unless the nomination papers are for the office of U.S. President and Vice President.
- **SB 216: Local Government Competitive Bidding Thresholds** - Sen. Tomczyk (R-Mosinee) and Reps. O'Connor (R-Fond du Lac) and Brooks (R-Saukville) - Under current law, local governments must competitively bid all projects above \$25,000 and award the contract to the lowest responsible bidder and must provide public notice for all projects between \$5,000 and \$25,000 prior to a contract being signed. This legislation increases the bidding threshold to \$50,000 and the notice threshold to \$10,000 for all public construction projects except road projects and indexes all bidding and notice thresholds to growth in the Consumer Price Index every five years. *The League has registered **in-favor** of this legislation.*
- **SB 213: Tax Credit for Rail Infrastructure Modernization** - Sen. Quinn (R-Birchwood) and Reps. Novak (R-Dodgeville) and Tranel (R-Cuba City) - This legislation creates an income and franchise tax credit for Class II and Class III railroads in the state to modernize rail infrastructure. Specifically, 50% of the amounts expended by the railroad for maintenance may be claimed or, if the entity does not have tax liability, may be transferred. Additionally, 50% of the amounts expended on new rail infrastructure and improvements may also be claimed. The legislation sets qualification requirements and processes for claiming the credits.
- **SB 209: Liability for Traffic Control Devices** - Sen. Wanggaard (R-Racine) and Rep. Knodl (R-Germantown) - This legislation exempts the manufacturer, distributor, seller, installer, or owner of a traffic control device from liability for damages arising from the design, manufacture, distribution, or installation of a traffic control device if the device complies with specifications established in the traffic control devices manual adopted by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and operates as intended. This liability limitation does not apply if the claimant establishes the device did not comply with the manual's specifications or operate as intended.
- **SB 208: Prohibiting Hedge Fund Ownership of Homes** - Sen. Keyeski (D-Lodi) and Rep. Haywood (D-Milwaukee) - This legislation prohibits hedge funds from acquiring or owning, in-

whole or in-part, a single-family home in Wisconsin beginning on the effective date of the legislation were it to become law. Any home acquired or owned in violation of this legislation would be forfeited to the state.

- **[SB 207](#): Hazard Mitigation and Erosion Control Revolving Loan Programs** - Sen. Jacque (R-New Franken) and Rep. Zimmerman (R-River Falls) - This legislation creates two new revolving loan programs. The first would be known as the Hazard Mitigation Revolving Loan Fund and would allow the state to accept federal funds from the Safeguarding Tomorrow through Ongoing Risk Mitigation (STORM) Act. Funds would be appropriated in compliance with the STORM Act. The second would be known as the Great Lakes Erosion Control Revolving Loan Program and would be funded by \$5 million to assist municipalities and homeowners in shoring the structural integrity of buildings along Great Lakes shorelines.
- **[SB 202](#): Local Guaranteed Income Programs** - Sen. Nass (R-Whitewater) and Rep. Piwowarczyk (R-Hubertus) - This legislation would prohibit any local unit of government from expending funds for the purpose of making payments to individuals under a guaranteed income program. These programs are defined to mean that individuals would receive regular, periodic cash payments that are unearned and may be used for any purpose.
- **[SB 194](#): Attorney Fees in Open Records Lawsuits** - Sen. Wanggaard (R-Racine) and Rep. Novak (R-Dodgeville) - This legislation would overturn a state Supreme Court decision and require that state or local governments sued for withholding or delaying access to records under the Open Records Law may have their attorney's fees recovered from that unit of government if the unit of government voluntarily provides the records after a mandamus action has been brought. Under the court decision, the person requesting the records may be entitled to those attorney's fees if they prevail in whole or in part under a court decision.
- **[SB 192](#): Fatality Review Teams** - Sen. James (R-Thorp) and Rep. Moses (R-Menomonie) - While not addressed in current law, several areas of the state have established fatality review teams, which are a multidisciplinary and multiagency team reviewing one or more types of death among children and adults and developing recommendations to prevent future deaths of similar circumstances. These deaths may include an overdose, suicide, material death, unexpected death or a child, and more. This legislation creates a statutory framework for these teams, allowing but not requiring a team's creation, and governs its responsibilities, ability to access certain records, confidentiality requirements, and disclosure of the information.
- **[SB 191](#): Requiring Subpoenas on Law Enforcement Officers to be Served at Work** - Sen. James (R-Thorp) and Rep. Goeben (R-Hobart) - This legislation requires that any subpoena served to a law enforcement officer in their official capacity must be served at their work address and may not be served at their residential address, either by exhibiting and reading it to the law enforcement officer or by leaving a copy of the subpoena at the officer's work address.
- **[SB 186](#): Training Completion Awards for Volunteer Firefighters** - Sen. Jacque (R-New Franken) and Rep. Sortwell (R-Two Rivers) - Under current law, the state administers a Service Award Program to provide awards to volunteer firefighters, EMRs, and EMTs based on their length-of-service. This legislation expands that program to provide grants to volunteer fire departments to make onetime training completion awards to volunteer firefighters. Any volunteer

firefighter who completes the required 60 hours of training is awarded \$500, with half from the state and half from the awarding local fire department.

- **[SB 185](#): Property Tax Exemption for Nonprofit Theaters** - Sen. Jacque (R-New Franken) and Rep. Kitchens (R-Sturgeon Bay) - Under current law, a nonprofit organization that includes one or more outdoor theaters for performing arts are exempt from property taxes if the total seating capacity is more than 400 persons and the entity was confirmed as tax-exempt no later than July 31, 1969. This legislation modifies that exemption to allow indoor and outdoor theaters to qualify, requires a seating capacity of 240 or more, and requires the tax-exempt status to have been confirmed no later than October 1, 1990.

Status of Bills with League Lobbying Positions

- **Senate Bill (SB) 183 / Assembly Bill (AB) 199: Non-Transport EMS Reimbursement, EMT Scope of Practice Report, and ERP Exemption** - Sens. Marklein (R-Spring Green) and James (R-Thorp) and Reps. Kurtz (R-Wonewoc), Zimmerman (R-River Falls), and Summerfield (R-Bloomer) - First, this legislation increases the Medicaid reimbursement for non-transport emergency medical service (EMS) calls to the maximum allowable rate for basic life support emergency transportation calls beginning January 1, 2027. Second, this legislation requires an annual report to the legislature on the scope of practice of emergency medical technicians (EMT) and responders (EMR) and how changes may impact training. Third, this legislation exempts the growth of charges from existing levy limit exemptions for fire and EMS districts from the calculations for eligibility in the Expenditure Restraint Program (EPR). *The League has registered **in-favor** of this legislation.*
 - *Senate Status* **(RECENT ACTION)**: The Senate Committee on Health held a public hearing on this bill on Wednesday, April 23.
 - *Assembly Status* **(RECENT ACTION)**: The Assembly Committee on State Affairs held a public hearing on this bill on Wednesday, April 23.
- **SB 182 / AB 198: EMS Education Access, Certification Cost Reimbursement, and Creating a Live 911 Pilot** - Sens. Marklein (R-Spring Green) and James (R-Thorp) and Reps. Kurtz (R-Wonewoc), Novak (R-Dodgeville), and Summerfield (R-Bloomer) - First, this legislation creates the structure for grants to technical colleges that train individuals for initial certification or licensure as an EMT or EMR. Second, this legislation creates a reimbursement structure for employers or individuals to receive the costs of their education and materials to become an EMT or EMR. Third, this legislation creates a Live 911 Pilot Program to provide grants that enable real-time video communication between public safety answering points and those calling for emergency services. *The League has registered **in-favor** of this legislation.*
 - *Senate Status* **(RECENT ACTION)**: The Senate Committee on Health held a public hearing on this bill on Wednesday, April 23.
 - *Assembly Status* **(RECENT ACTION)**: The Assembly Committee on State Affairs held a public hearing on this bill on Wednesday, April 23.
- **SB 181 / AB 197: Levy Limit Exemption for Regional (County-Sized) EMS Districts** - Sens. Marklein (R-Spring Green) and James (R-Thorp) and Reps. Kurtz (R-Wonewoc) and Gustafson (R-Fox Crossing) - This legislation creates a new levy limit exemption for regional EMS provided through intergovernmental agreements or a district that covers at least 232 square miles or includes at least eight cities, villages, and towns. If one entity is responsible for EMS across a qualifying service territory, the costs would be exempt from levy limits and allowed to grow at a rate equal to the growth in the Consumer Price Index plus 5% annually. This legislation, and its service territory parameters, are meant to mimic county-wide EMS which is exempt from the levy but allows for municipalities to determine their own service territories that cover a county-sized area (232 square miles being the smallest county by land size and eight municipalities being the smallest number in any county). *The League has registered **in-favor** of this legislation.*
 - *Senate Status* **(RECENT ACTION)**: The Senate Committee on Health held a public hearing on this bill on Wednesday, April 23.
 - *Assembly Status* **(RECENT ACTION)**: The Assembly Committee on State Affairs held a public hearing on this bill on Wednesday, April 23.

- **SB 180 / AB 194: Modifications to the Housing Loan Programs** - Sens. Quinn (R-Birchwood), Feyen (R-Fond du Lac), and Jagler (R-Watertown) and Reps. Armstrong (R-Rice Lake) and Brooks (R-Saukville) - Last session, with the League as one of a handful of groups at the table, the state made a historic investment of \$525 million for the development of housing across Wisconsin through three low-interest loan programs at the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA). However, an 11th hour amendment added to those bills made implementation problematic for developers. Despite some early successes, the problems created by the amendment last session became increasingly evident. As a result, this subsequent legislation is needed to address the significant barriers to these programs and unlock additional housing opportunities throughout the state. This includes allowing loans to be stacked with active tax incremental districts and historic tax credits, increasing the maximum loan amounts, allowing a smaller number of units in municipalities at or under 10,000 residents and mixed-use developments to qualify for the Vacancy-to-Vitality Program, and ensuring statewide distribution of loan funds. *The League has registered **in-favor** of this legislation.*
 - *Senate Status* **(RECENT ACTION)**: The Senate Committee on Insurance, Housing, Rural Issues and Forestry held a public hearing on this bill on Thursday, April 17.
 - *Assembly Status*: The bill has been referred to the Assembly Committee on Housing and Real Estate.
- **SB 178 / AB 182: Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program Changes** - Sen. Quinn (R-Birchwood) and Rep. Armstrong (R-Rice Lake) - This legislation makes several modifications to the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program at WHEDA, including requiring that at least 35% of the tax credits allocated each year are for qualified projects in rural areas of Wisconsin if enough applications are available to satisfy the requirement. Other changes to the program remove a requirement that a project is financed with tax-exempt bonds and allows insurers that are shareholders of a tax-option corporation, a partner of a partnership, or a member of a limited liability corporation to claim the credit. *The League has registered **in-favor** of this legislation.*
 - *Senate Status* **(RECENT ACTION)**: The Senate Committee on Insurance, Housing, Rural Issues and Forestry held a public hearing on this bill on Thursday, April 17.
 - *Assembly Status*: The bill has been referred to the Assembly Committee on Housing and Real Estate.
- **SB 175: Building Permit Fee Exemptions for Disabled Veterans** - Sen. Jacque (R-New Franken) and Rep. Snyder (R-Weston) - This legislation reduces building permit fees paid by disabled veterans to a local government if the improvements are necessary to accommodate their disability. To qualify, the improvements must be to their primary residence that is owned by the disabled veteran or their caretaker and the veteran must be classified as at least 50% disabled, and the local government may require proof of all the conditions above. If qualified, the local government must reduce its building permit fees by 75% or \$500, whichever reduction is less. *The League has referred as **neutral** on this legislation and notes our appreciation for the authors and veterans' groups to work with us prior to bill introduction to address issues we identified in the original legislation.*
 - *Senate Status* **(RECENT ACTION)**: The Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Veteran and Military Affairs held a public hearing on this bill on Tuesday, April 15.
 - *Assembly Status*: The bill is awaiting introduction and referral.
- **SB 173 / AB 159: Rural Creative Economy Grant Program** - Sen. Quinn (R-Birchwood) and Rep. Novak (R-Dodgeville) - This legislation creates the Rural Creative Economy Development Grant

Program at the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC). Funding may be awarded to local or tribal governments, economic development organizations, and nonprofit organizations to develop or implement and plan and market, brand, and promote local creative enterprises, public arts performances or exhibitions, or public spaces to increase tourism, enhance visitor experiences, or bolster community development in rural areas of the state. Grants may not exceed \$50,000 and must be matched. *The League has registered in-favor of this legislation.*

- *Senate Status:* The bill has been referred to the Senate Committee on Insurance, Housing, Rural Issues and Forestry.
- *Assembly Status:* The bill has been referred to the Assembly Committee on Rural Development.

- **SB 170 / AB 196: Rehiring of WRS Annuitants** - Sen. Marklein (R-Spring Green) and Reps. Wittke (R-Caledonia), Kitchens (R-Sturgeon Bay), and Rodriguez (R-Oak Creek) - Under current law, if a person is receiving an annuity from the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS), they must suspend that annuity to be rehired by a WRS participating employer. This legislation allows all WRS annuitants rehired by a WRS-participating employer without suspending their annuity for up to 60 months (5 years) if they retired on or after July 2, 2013, separate from employment for at least 75 days, did not have an agreement for employment upon retiring, and elect not to be a participating employee. The employer is required to make contributions for the employee as if they were a WRS participant. *The League has registered in-favor of this legislation.*

- *Senate Status:* The bill has been referred to the Senate Committee on Transportation and Local Government.
- *Assembly Status:* The bill has been referred to the Assembly Committee on Local Government.

- **SB 156 / AB 128: First Responder Training and Administration of Epinephrine Delivery Systems** - Sen. Testin (R-Stevens Point) and Rep. Krug (R-Rome) - This legislation requires that all first responders (which includes emergency medical responders, emergency medical services practitioners, firefighters, and law enforcement officers) are trained on how to recognize the signs and symptoms of severe allergic reactions and the procedures for administration of an epinephrine delivery system. The legislation also requires that each first responder always has an epinephrine delivery system available for use while on duty. Finally, the legislation allows the Wisconsin Department of Health Services to distribute epinephrine delivery systems to first responders that have completed the training requirements. *The League has registered as undisclosed on this legislation and has noted that we are concerned with the upfront and ongoing costs and the availability and shelf life of the medication.*

- *Senate Status* **(RECENT ACTION)**: The Senate Committee on Government Operations, Labor and Economic Development held a public hearing on this bill on Thursday, April 24.
- *Assembly Status:* The bill has been referred to the Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care.

- **SB 128 / AB 131: Programs and Policies to Address PFAS** - Sen. Wimberger (R-Oconto) and Reps. Mursau (R-Crivitz) and Swearingen (R-Rhineland) - Similar to a bill supported by the League last session after working with the authors on an amendment to address municipal concerns, this legislation would exempt municipalities and certain other parties from liability for PFAS remediation under certain circumstances and conditions. The legislation also establishes a Municipal PFAS Grant Program to assist with capital and operational costs related to PFAS, exempts certain emergency water utility actions to address PFAS from Public Service

Commission of Wisconsin approvals, and establishes other programs and policies related to PFAS. *The League has registered **in-favor** of this legislation.*

- *Senate Status:* The bill has been referred to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Veteran and Military Affairs.
 - *Assembly Status:* The bill has been referred to the Assembly Committee on Environment.
- **[SB 127](#) / [AB 130](#): Liability Exemptions for PFAS Contamination** - Sen. Wimberger (R-Oconto) and Reps. Mursau (R-Crivitz) and Swearingen (R-Rhineland) - This legislation mimics a portion of SB 128 relating to liability exemptions for PFAS remediation. This legislation would exempt farmers and other parties who spread PFAS-contaminated biosolids on a property, fire departments and airports that used PFAS-containing firefighting foam, landfills that accepted PFAS-laden waste, and those who own property where the PFAS contamination is present but didn't originate from liability. *The League has registered **in-favor** of this legislation.*
 - *Senate Status:* The bill has been referred to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Veteran and Military Affairs.
 - *Assembly Status:* The bill has been referred to the Assembly Committee on Environment.
- **[SB 113](#) / [AB 118](#): Transition to Grazing Pilot Program** - Sens. James (R-Thorp) and Testin (R-Stevens Point) and Reps. Novak (R-Dodgeville) and Tranel (R-Cuba City) - This legislation establishes a Transition to Grazing Pilot Program at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection to provide support and grants farmers who are implementing livestock forage-based managed grazing systems. Grants of up to \$40,000 are available per project. The League is engaged in this legislation due to its potential to reduce nonpoint source water pollution in waterways throughout the state, including those running through Wisconsin cities and villages. *The League has registered **in-favor** of this legislation.*
 - *Senate Status:* The Senate Committee on Agriculture and Revenue held a public hearing on this bill on Thursday, April 3.
 - *Assembly Status:* The Assembly Committee on Agriculture held a public hearing on this bill on Tuesday, April 8.
- **[SB 105](#) / [AB 138](#): Rehiring of WRS Annuitants** - Sens. Tomczyk (R-Mosinee) and Hutton (R-Brookfield) and Reps. Donovan (R-Greenfield) and Goeben (R-Hobart) - This legislation allows the annuitant to be rehired without suspending their annuity if they separate from employment for at least 75 days, did not have an employment agreement upon retirement, elect not to become a WRS participating employee, and were serving in a protective occupation (i.e., law enforcement officers and firefighters) or were a county jailer prior to retirement. This legislation would first apply on the effective date of the bill. *The League has registered **in-favor** of this legislation.*
 - *Senate Status:* The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety held a public hearing on this bill on Tuesday, April 1.
 - *Assembly Status:* The bill has been referred to the Assembly Committee on State Affairs.
- **[SB 96](#) / [AB 106](#): Amending the EV Charging Stations Law** - Sen. Marklein (R-Spring Green) and Rep. VanderMeer (R-Tomah) - This legislation makes a technical correction to last session's electric vehicle (EV) charging stations law which the League supported. Specifically, an oversight in the bill passed last session exempted the EV charging station tax of 3 cents per kilowatt-hour for Level 3 fast chargers placed at a residence but allowed the tax for slower chargers. This legislation exempts the tax collection from all EV charging stations placed at a residence. *The League has registered **in-favor** of this legislation.*

- *Senate Status* **(UPCOMING ACTION)**: The Senate Committee on Utilities and Tourism has scheduled a public hearing on this bill on Wednesday, April 30.
 - *Assembly Status*: The bill has been referred to the Assembly Committee on Energy and Utilities.
- **SB 64 / AB 61: Penalties for Harm to Police and Fire Dogs** - Sen. Wanggaard (R-Racine) and Rep. Nedweski (R-Pleasant Prairie) - This legislation increases the criminal penalties associated with injuring or killing any animal used by a law enforcement department or fire department to perform official duties. Penalties for actions taken resulting in injury to the animal are raised from a Class I to a Class H Felony, and actions taken resulting in the death of the animal are raised from a Class H to a Class G Felony. *The League has registered **in-favor** of this legislation.*
 - *Senate Status*: The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety held a public hearing on this bill on Tuesday, April 1.
 - *Assembly Status*: The full Assembly passed the legislation on a voice vote on March 13.
- **SB 44 / AB 42: Prohibiting Chicken and Quail Bans** - Sen. Cabral-Guevara (R-Appleton) and Rep. Sortwell (R-Two Rivers) - This legislation prohibits cities, villages, towns, counties, and sewerage districts from prohibiting an owner or certain lessees of residential property from keeping four or fewer chickens or quail. While municipal officials could not prohibit what's often referred to as 'backyard chickens,' the proposal would allow local governments to require permits, require notification of adjacent landowners, impose regulations on fowl housing, prohibit the keeping of roosters, and impose cleanliness standards. *The League has registered **against** this legislation.*
 - *Senate Status*: The bill has been referred to the Senate Committee on Transportation and Local Government.
 - *Assembly Status*: The Assembly Committee on Local Government held a public hearing on this bill on Wednesday, March 19.
- **SB 37 / AB 41: Prohibiting Local Regulation of Gardens** - Sen. Jacque (R-New Franken) and Rep. Sortwell (R-Two Rivers) - This legislation prohibits cities, villages, towns, and counties from requiring a permit for or prohibiting the cultivation of vegetable or flower gardens on property not owned by the local government. Municipalities would retain the power to control the spread of noxious weeds or invasive species. *The League has registered **against** this legislation.*
 - *Senate Status*: The bill has been referred to the Senate Committee on Transportation and Local Government.
 - *Assembly Status*: The Assembly Committee on Local Government held a public hearing on this bill on Wednesday, March 19.
- **SB 34 / AB 35: Allowing Candidates for Certain Offices to Withdraw Candidacy** - Sen. Wanggaard (R-Racine) and Rep. Steffen (R-Howard) - This legislation allows candidates for federal and state office that are elected in the November general elections to withdraw their candidacy. These deadlines to withdrawal are June 10th preceding the partisan primary and the 4th Tuesday in August preceding the general election, which align with the final deadlines for the state to certify and report candidates for these offices to local clerks. This bill only impacts the offices listed and does not make changes to the processes for other offices, including local elected offices. *The League has registered as **neutral** on this legislation and is working with the authors to move the withdrawal deadlines back to allow clerks to meet ballot printing deadlines.*

- *Senate Status:* The bill has been referred to the Senate Committee on Licensing, Regulatory Reform, State and Federal Affairs.
 - *Assembly Status:* The Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections held a public hearing on this bill on Tuesday, April 8.
- **[SB 26](#) / [AB 21](#): Technical College Facility Lease to Childcare Centers** - Sen. Feyen (R-Fond Du Lac) and Rep. O'Connor (R-Fond Du Lac) - Under current law, technical colleges may rent unneeded space in their facilities to other entities. However, since 1999, they may not rent space to others for school purposes. This legislation creates an exemption to that prohibition for the lease of technical college facilities to childcare centers. With 52 campuses across the state, this legislation could be one tool in the toolbox that helps to address the shortage of childcare slots in Wisconsin. *The League has registered **in-favor** of this legislation.*
 - *Senate Status:* The Senate Committee on Mental Health, Substance Abuse Prevention, Children and Families recommended the bill for passage on a 5-0 vote on February 13.
 - *Assembly Status:* The Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities held a public hearing on the bill on February 20.