316 W. Washington Ave., Suite 600
Madison, WI 53703
Phone: 608-267-2380
Fax: 608-267-0645
Email: league@lwm-info.org
Website: lwm-info.org

2025-2026 Legislative Session
League Summary of Legislation of Municipal Importance

Bills Introduced March 3rd to March 14th

- **Senate Bill (SB) 132: Impersonating Public Safety Officials** - Sen. James (R-Thorp) and Rep. Wichgers (R-Muskego) - Under current law, a person may not impersonate a law enforcement officer, a firefighter, or an EMS practitioner with the intent to mislead others into believing that the person is actually a public safety official. Persons found to be in violation may be charged with a Class A misdemeanor. This legislation increases the penalty for impersonating a public safety official to a Class I felony.

- **SB 128: Programs and Policies to Address PFAS** - Sen. Wimberger (R-Oconto) and Reps. Mursau (R-Crivitz) and Swearingen (R-Rhinelander) - 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.*

- **SB 127: Liability Exemptions for PFAS Contamination** - Sen. Wimberger (R-Oconto) and Reps. Mursau (R-Crivitz) and Swearingen (R-Rhinelander) - This legislation mimics a portion of SB 128 relating to liability exemptions for PFAS remediation. This legislation, and the legislation above, 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.*

- **SB 126: Delaying Local Candidate Campaign Reporting to the State** - Sen. Tomczyk (R-Mosinee) and Rep. Gundrum (R-Slinger) - 2023 Wisconsin Act 126, which the League supported, required that all candidates for local office and committees that support or oppose local candidates and referendums register and file campaign finance reports with the Wisconsin Ethics Commission as opposed to their local clerk. The changes are set to take effect on July 1, 2025. This legislation delays the effective date to December 1, 2027, meaning that, if this legislation were to take effect, local candidates and committees would continue submitting their campaign finance reports to their local clerk for an extra two and a half years.

- **SB 113: 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 noting 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.

- **SB 105: Rehiring of WRS Annuitants** - Sens. Tomczyk (R-Mosinee) and Hutton (R-Brookfield) and Reps. Donovan (R-Greenfield) and Goeben (R-Hobart) - 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 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 first applies to those retiring on the effective date of the bill if it were to become law.

- **SB 96: 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.

- **SB 92: Penalties for the Aggregate Amount of Thefts** - Sen. Jacque (R-New Franken) and Rep. Penterman (R-Hustisford) - This legislation authorizes law enforcement and prosecutors to charge defendants with the aggregated value of property theft or retail theft crimes over a six-month period. In other words, this legislation allows the defendant to be charged with a more serious felony offense if the total value of goods stolen reaches certain statutory thresholds.

- **SB 82: Restrictions Based on the Energy Source of Certain Devices** - Sen. Tomczyk (R-Mosinee) and Rep. Tucker (R-Grantsburg) - Similar to two separate bills introduced last session which were vetoed by the Governor, this legislation prohibits state agencies and local governments from restricting the use or sale of a motor vehicle or any other device (such as lawn mowers and leaf blowers) on the basis of the energy source used to power the vehicle or device.

The following four bills (SBs 111, 110, 108 and 106) resulted from the Study Committee on Emergency Detention and Civil Commitment of Minors, a joint legislator-citizen process designed to find solutions on complex issues. Based on conversations with municipal officials, the League's 2025-2026 Legislative Agenda includes mental health as a component of one of the five pillars. These four bills are being mentioned as a piece of that priority on addressing mental health concerns across Wisconsin and would have varying degrees of impact on municipalities if passed into law.

- **SB 111: Transportation of Minors for Emergency Detention** - Joint Legislative Council - This legislation specifies that a county approving the emergency detention of a minor for mental health concerns is responsible for the transportation of the minor to an emergency detention

facility. The county may contract with an ambulance service, third-party vendor, or law enforcement agency, but may only utilize the law enforcement agency if it is the least restrictive and most appropriate method or the only reasonable available alternative. However, these provisions do not apply unless the state is able to provide federal reimbursements to counties or their contracted parties for the cost of the transportation of the minor.

- **SB 110: Youth Behavioral Health MA Program** - Joint Legislative Council - This legislation authorizes the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) to create a Youth Behavioral Health Medical Assistance (MA) Program. This new program, if approved by a federal waiver, would coordinate access and services across programs for children and youth under age 21 who are experiencing complex behavioral health needs, particularly in multiple systems of care.

- **SB 108: Sharing Minor Safety Plans** - Joint Legislative Council - This legislation requires DHS to maintain a portal that is available to law enforcement agencies, EMS providers, and other entities that may encounter a minor suffering from a mental health crisis. A minor safety plan must provide guidance on how to help the individual experiencing a behavioral or developmental health challenge or crisis, and the plan may only be shared with the minor's consent.

- **SB 106: Regional Psychiatric Treatment Facilities** - Joint Legislative Council - This legislation allows DHS to establish a certification process for regional psychiatric residential treatment facilities to provide inpatient psychiatric services for individuals under 21 years of age. The facilities would be required to meet certain state and federal standards to be initially certified and recertified. The establishment of regional facilities, which could be facilitated through a grant program established in the legislation, may assist in reducing the transportation time of minors suffering from a mental health crisis.

Status of Bills with League Lobbying Positions

- **Senate Bill (SB) 64 / Assembly Bill (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 bill has been referred to the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety.
  - *Assembly Status (RECENT ACTION):* The Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety recommended the bill for passage on a 15-0 vote on March 11 and 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 (UPCOMING ACTION):* The Assembly Committee on Local Government has scheduled a public hearing on this bill for 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. Municipal officials 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 (UPCOMING ACTION):* The Assembly Committee on Local Government has scheduled a public hearing on this bill for Wednesday, March 19.

- **SB 34 / AB 35: Allowing Candidates for Certain Offices to Withdrawal Candidacy** - Sen. Wanggaard (R-Racine) and Rep. Steffen (R-Howard) - This legislation allows independent candidates for president and vice president and candidates for the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, governor and lieutenant governor, secretary of state, state treasurer, the state senate, and the state assembly to withdrawal their candidacy at certain timelines prescribed in the bill. These deadlines include before June 10th preceding the partisan primary or before 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 more easily 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 bill has been referred to the Senate Committee on Campaigns and Elections.

- **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.