

WISCONSIN PUBLIC HEALTH COUNCIL

Ensuring every person and community in Wisconsin can be healthy and thrive.



May 12, 2023

Resolution Requesting Removal of Local Health Officer Authority Provisions from Shared Revenue Bill

Whereas, the Wisconsin Public Health Council is a statutorily created body of Wisconsin residents charged with advising the Department of Health Services, the Governor, the Legislature and the public on progress in implementing the state's health plan as well as response to public health emergencies; and

Whereas, the Public Health Council is comprised of representatives from health care consumers, health care providers, health profession educators, local health departments and boards, American Indian Tribes and public safety agencies; and

Whereas, the Public Health Council has reviewed Assembly Bill 245 relating to several local government operations, authorities and funding mechanism; and

Whereas, the Public Health Council has itself considered and received input from critical stakeholders related to the potential impact of Assembly Bill 245; and

Whereas, the Public Health Council recognizes and endorses the important role county and municipal aid, also known as shared revenue, plays in supporting local units of government providing critical services to residents of the State of Wisconsin; and

Whereas, the Public Health Council is concerned about the potential consequences of Assembly Bill 245's provisions related to limiting the authority of local health officers to respond to local public health emergencies, including:

- creating a requirement that business closures by local health officers that would extend beyond 14 days need approval by local governing bodies may put the health and safety of residents at risk should a local governing body not meet to consider such an extension
- mandating a public debate that inadvertently creates a negative impact on businesses, their employees and their customers
- the timeframe needed to resolve certain public health threats, especially communicable disease and food borne illnesses can extend beyond 14 days; therefore

Be it resolved, the Public Health Council acting in its statutorily defined role as an advisory body to the Legislature and the Governor, respectfully requests that the provisions of Assembly Bill 245 relating to the authority of local health officers be removed; and

Therefore be it further resolved, the Public Health Council acting in its statutorily defined role as an advisory body to the Department of Health Services, the Governor and the Legislature encourages state law and policy makers and administrators to enter into meaningful conversations with the Public Health Council and key public health stakeholders to explore meaningful, inclusive and impactful solutions to enhancing the health and wellbeing of Wisconsin residents; and

Lastly, be it resolved that copies of this resolution are shared with the Secretary of the Department of Health Services, the Governor, the Legislature and representatives of:

- the Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards
- the Wisconsin Public Health Association
- leaders of Wisconsin's Federally-recognized American Indian Tribes and Bands

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