

Floor Session Media Coverage, April 19, 2023

Notes: reckless driving penalties, legal fees, skeletal calendar – “do nothing agenda”

Media Coverage:

WI State Journal - [Wisconsin Senate lifts limits on attorney's fees in records cases, increases reckless driving penalties](#) The Wisconsin Senate on Wednesday approved bills increasing penalties for reckless driving and allowing people who sue to obtain public records to have their attorney fees reimbursed even if the documents are eventually turned over voluntarily. [...] Noting that the Senate was scheduled to vote on fewer than 10 bills Wednesday, Senate Minority Leader Melissa Agard, D-Madison, said before the session that Republicans were putting forth a “do-nothing agenda.”

Fox News (AP) - [Wisconsin Senate moves to reverse Supreme Court open records ruling](#) The Wisconsin Senate moved on Wednesday to undo a controversial state Supreme Court ruling that made it easier for state agencies to delay handing over public records.

TMJ4 - [Wisconsin Senate passes 2nd reckless driving bill, doubling fines and max sentences](#) - [...] What started as a Republican effort two months ago quickly garnered broad support including from Sen. LaTonya Johnson, a Democrat representing Milwaukee. “Why do you believe now is the time to increase punishments?” TMJ4 reporter Ben Jordan asked. “Because punishments should have been increased a long time ago,” Sen. Johnson said. “The last time fines were raised for this offense was in 1953 and the reality is that the cost of the offenses now are not enough.”

Urban Milwaukee - [Wisconsin Legislature Increases Reckless Driving Penalties](#) Fines and jail time for reckless driving offenses would increase under a bill approved by lawmakers in the Wisconsin state Senate Wednesday. [...] Sen. Dianne Hesselbein, D-Middleton, used this weekend’s Earth Day — a holiday born in Wisconsin — to argue that Wisconsin is being outpaced by its neighbors when it comes to passing legislation. “Our neighbors to the east and the west — Michigan Senate and Minnesota House — passed more bills this January than the past six Januarys combined,” she said. “In Wisconsin, it is the strangest thing. It’s like we’re in the upside down, a world that moves so slowly. We cannot even do simple things like declare official days official until that day is in the past. We’re going to be recognizing Earth Day after Mother’s Day in this next month.”

MJS - [Wisconsin's legislative session: Senate passes bill to increase reckless driving penalties](#) the 2023-24 Wisconsin legislative session is underway, with debates brewing on issues ranging from public safety, abortion access, tax cuts and the state's projected \$7 billion budget surplus, funding for schools and more.

WPR - [Wisconsin Senate approves increased penalties for reckless drivers](#) - Fines and jail time for reckless driving offenses would increase under a bill approved by lawmakers in the Wisconsin state Senate Wednesday. The body gavelled in and out in less than an hour. Before the session, Democratic lawmakers criticized the day's business as illustrative of an inactive GOP-led Legislature. Senators approved a bill by a bipartisan vote of 30-2 that would increase the range of fines imposed on people charged with reckless driving offenses. The legislation had previously been approved by the Wisconsin state Assembly.

WI Examiner - [Senate quickly passes public records bill, resolutions, confirms nominees on Wednesday. Democrats criticize the “do-nothing” calendar.](#) Senate lawmakers passed a bill that would undo a Wisconsin Supreme Court ruling on public records cases, reconfirmed two of Gov. Tony Evers’ cabinet officials and passed several resolutions during a Wednesday floor session.