

Peter Barca Leaving Evers Administration

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers announced yesterday that Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) Secretary Peter Barca will be leaving the Evers Administration after serving the administration for more than five years. Secretary Barca was one of the governor's first appointments to his cabinet in 2019.



“Peter has been with our administration since Day One, and I knew from the beginning that he would be a dedicated, enthusiastic, and effective leader for the Department of Revenue,” said Gov. Evers. “We’ve accomplished much together over the past five years on behalf of the people of Wisconsin, including ensuring Wisconsin taxpayers will see \$1.5 billion in tax relief annually through income tax cuts I’ve signed into law. I thank Peter for service and wish him and his family all the best.”

In 2023 alone, DOR stopped \$305 million in fraudulent income tax refunds, returned \$38.8 million in unclaimed property, distributed over \$2.4 billion to local governments in shared revenue and property tax relief, and the lottery achieved record sales of \$981.6 million, over 30 percent of which is typically returned to homeowners in the form of a property tax credit. Additionally, DOR’s average processing time for individual income tax returns was fewer than five days in 2023, and the tax revenue forecast error was 1.5 percent with an eight-month time

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horizon, which is within DOR's two percent objective. This is based on Wisconsin's history as the best tax forecasting state in the country.

"I have been honored to be a member of the Evers Administration in such a key time for the state," said Secretary Barca. "The leadership and staff at DOR are dedicated, effective, and highly engaged. In addition to the tax relief, historic changes in shared revenue, our team administered most of the large grant programs and were pleased to be part of the Evers Team that was number one in the nation in distributing federal funds to help businesses, farms, and organizations. It was especially positive to end this legislative session with important public safety measures like new vapor controls and using the tax system to facilitate organ donations."

In addition to his service as DOR secretary for the past five years, Barca served as a state legislator from 1985 to 1993 and from 2009 to 2019, representing the Kenosha area. He served for seven years as the assembly minority leader, passing a wide range of bills and working to improve and strengthen the legislative process. He also was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and served in U.S. Congress from 1993 to 1995. Following his time in U.S. Congress, Barca served for nearly five years as the Midwest Regional Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration during the Clinton Administration. He also was appointed to lead the National Regulatory Fairness Program, an initiative aimed at making regulatory enforcement more small business friendly. Barca later spent nearly a decade as vice president and then president of Aurora Associates International, an international project management company that conducted international development projects in more than 25 countries. He had previously served as CEO of a non-profit organization focused on employment and training, housing, and rehabilitation services.

Barca's retirement is effective on April 9, 2024. A search to fill Barca's position is already underway. The governor expects to announce Barca's replacement in the coming weeks.