

Evers Creates Green Ribbon Commission on Clean Energy and Environmental Innovation

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Commission will advise on the creation of the Green Innovation Fund to leverage public and private financing to invest in environmental and clean energy solutions.

MADISON — On Wednesday, Gov. Tony Evers signed Executive Order #195 creating the Green Ribbon Commission on Clean Energy and Environmental Innovation to advise on creating the state's first-ever Green Innovation Fund. The Green Innovation Fund and its partners will leverage public and private financing to invest in projects that provide environmental and clean energy solutions to businesses, reduce pollution, lower energy costs for families, and expand access to clean, affordable energy options.



“Wisconsin is ready for bold and urgent solutions to the climate crisis, and creating the Green Innovation Fund will not only help propel our state forward towards our clean energy goals and enable our state to leverage federal funding available under the Inflation Reduction Act, but it will establish Wisconsin as a leader in innovative technology and clean energy,” said Gov. Evers. “This Commission is an important step forward in doing that and to ensuring this Fund is successful in building a sustainable, clean energy economy for the future.”

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The Green Innovation Fund will be the first environmental and clean energy fund in Wisconsin. Commonly referred to as “green banks,” similar public and private entities have been established in other states, including Colorado, Illinois, and Nevada. Both the Governor’s Task Force on Climate Change, which Gov. Evers established in 2019, and the state’s Clean Energy Plan released last April recommend the state of Wisconsin evaluate options for a “green bank” to support projects in Wisconsin. In addition to private financing for the Fund, the federal Inflation Reduction Act created the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund and allocated \$27 billion in competitive funding for states and nonprofit entities that collaborate with community financing institutions, such as green banks, to support projects that will combat the climate crisis, invest in innovative clean energy development, and create good-paying jobs. Additional details on the Fund will be available in the coming months.



“Solving Wisconsin’s environmental and clean energy challenges requires collaboration across the state,” said DOA Secretary Kathy Blumenfeld. “We’re excited to work with WEDC and other partners to support the Governor’s Green Ribbon Commission on Clean Energy and Environmental Innovation so we can collaboratively identify solutions that will move us toward a green energy future for Wisconsin’s economy, residents, and communities, and support our state’s Clean Energy Plan.”

The Green Ribbon Commission on Clean Energy and Environmental Innovation will consist of members appointed by the governor, including representatives from the Department of Administration (DOA), the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), and relevant stakeholders. The Fund will be administered by WEDC in partnership with DOA to support the development and deployment of next-generation environmental and clean energy technologies and projects in Wisconsin, helping to create jobs and reduce energy costs for families and businesses.

“The Green Innovation Fund is a great opportunity for our state to invest in environmental and clean energy technologies that will stimulate innovation and create next-generation jobs,” said WEDC Secretary and CEO Missy Hughes. “WEDC will actively seek all possible funding opportunities so Wisconsin manufacturers and other businesses can position themselves as leaders in these new technologies.”

The creation of the Green Ribbon Commission on Clean Energy and Environmental Innovation and the Green Innovation Fund is a critical step in advancing the state’s goal to ensure all

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electricity consumed within the state is 100 percent carbon-free by 2050, as outlined by Gov. Evers in Executive Order #38. The Fund will help ensure that more Wisconsin families, businesses, and communities will be able to utilize new technologies and will ensure that the impact will be felt in every ZIP code throughout Wisconsin, including communities that have traditionally been left out of clean energy and climate change decision making.

Gov. Evers has also proposed significant investments in clean energy innovation and workforce development in his 2023-25 Executive Budget. Gov. Evers proposes establishing the Office of Sustainability and Clean Energy in statute and providing \$4 million for a renewable and clean energy research grant administered by the Office, creating a \$5 million Clean Energy Small Business Incubator within DOA, which will provide business development, mentorship, and expertise to Wisconsin small businesses operating in the clean energy sector, and establishing a program to utilize federal funding to further build out Wisconsin's electric vehicle charging infrastructure. This and other recommended actions will enable the state to use \$34.5 million in federal funding over the biennium, along with potential state funds, to allow greater use of electric vehicles throughout the state. Additionally, Gov. Evers has proposed \$10 million for a clean energy job training and reemployment program, \$2 million under the Wisconsin Fast Forward framework for training in green jobs, including conservation and environmental careers pathways, and \$2 million to create the Southeast Wisconsin Green Jobs Corps to encourage young adults facing barriers to employment to enter energy efficiency, conservation, and environmental sector jobs. More information regarding the governor's budget recommendations is available [here](#).

A copy of Executive Order #195 is available [here](#).