WHEREAS; bats are highly adaptable and resilient animals, found in natural, anthropogenic, rural, and urban settings, and they play an important role as predators of biting insects in reducing the risk of insect-borne diseases, such as the West Nile Virus that affects birds and mammals, including humans; and

WHEREAS; Wisconsin is home to eight bat species that are both ecologically and economically important insect-eating species that consume forestry pests and a significant amount of agricultural pests, reducing crop damage and the need for insecticide applications; and

WHEREAS; Wisconsin's four cave hibernating bat species—big brown bat, little brown bat, northern long-eared bat, and tricolored bat—are threatened species in Wisconsin, having experienced steep initial declines since the arrival of White-nose Syndrome to the state in 2014; and

WHEREAS; fortunately, many little brown bat summer and winter colonies in Wisconsin have stabilized, with some increasing, making Wisconsin home to a significant portion of the surviving little brown bats in North America; and

WHEREAS; while Wisconsin has a proud history of conservation and environmental stewardship, bats remain a group of animals often misunderstood and subject to direct or accidental killings, underscoring the need to protect their habitats, increase public awareness, and support conservation efforts; and

WHEREAS; this week, the state of Wisconsin joins its dedicated local, state, and federal partners, as well as advocates, organizations, and conservationists in celebrating bats, raising awareness about the conservation efforts to support bats, and ensuring the collective well-being of the environment and state;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tony Evers, Governor of the State of Wisconsin,
do hereby proclaim October 24 through 31 2026 as

WISCONSIN BAT WEEK

throughout the State of Wisconsin and I commend this observance
to all our state's residents.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Madison this 15th day of October 2026.

TONY EVERS, Governor

By the Governor:

SARAH GODLEWSKI, Secretary of State