

WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

CAPITOL UPDATE

February 29, 2008

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WCC Testifies against Abortion Ban Repeal

At a public hearing before the Senate Committee on Health, Human Services, Insurance, and Job Creation, on February 27th, the WCC [testified](#) against [Senate Bill 398](#), which would repeal Wisconsin's criminal abortion statute. Following lengthy testimony from both opponents and supporters of the bill, the committee adjourned without taking further action.

Assembly Passes Partial Birth Abortion Ban

By a vote of 59 to 38, the Assembly passed [Assembly Bill 710](#), which would bring Wisconsin's ban on partial birth abortions in line with federal law. As reported previously, the WCC testified in support of the bill.

WCC Questions Further Regulation of Choice Program

Senator Lena Taylor (D-Milwaukee) and Representative Sonyd Pope-Roberts (D-Verona) have authored two bills that would place additional requirements on schools participating in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP). These bills received a public hearing last week before the Senate Committee on Education.

Under [Senate Bill 349](#), MPCP participating schools would have to fulfill new records-keeping and compliance requirements. The WCC [testified](#) in opposition to this bill, saying it was unnecessary because Catholic schools, and other MPCP schools, already provide the requisite information to parents. The new regulations would alter the current record release system, resulting in increased administrative burden and further state involvement in MPCP schools.

[Senate Bill 486](#) would require MPCP educators to acquire and maintain certain licensure requirements. The WCC [testified](#) in opposition to the bill, reminding the Committee that MPCP

schools are already required, under Wisconsin Statutes s. 119.23(2)(a)7, to attain accreditation. The accrediting standards for Archdiocesan schools, as well as other MPCP schools, require educators to attain state certification.

WCC Opposes Pharmacist Contraception Mandate and Redefinition of Abortion

The WCC will testify on March 5 at a public hearing (see below for time and location) on [Senate Bill 232](#) (Sen. Judy Robson, D-Beloit), which would require every pharmacist licensed in Wisconsin to “promptly dispense a valid prescription for any federal-food-and-drug-administration-approved contraceptive, unless such a prescription is contraindicated for a particular patient.” The bill would also redefine abortion in Wisconsin by denying that an unborn child “means a human being from the time of conception until it is born alive.”

WCC Comments on Mandated Care for Rape Victims

The Wisconsin Catholic Conference this week sent a [letter](#) to state legislators addressing the WCC’s position on [Assembly Bill 377](#). AB 377 establishes care requirements for hospitals in the treatment of rape victims. The letter reiterates Catholic directives regarding the provision of contraception to rape victims and affirms the WCC’s support for the protection of conscience.

By a vote of 25-6 (with 2 not voting) the Senate concurred in AB 377. The bill is now ready for enrollment, and once enrolled, will be sent to the Governor for his signature.

Senate Unanimously Passes Human Trafficking Bill

By a vote of 33-0, the Senate this week passed [Senate Bill 292](#), which would criminalize human trafficking in Wisconsin. The bill is now ready for enrollment. The WCC [testified](#) previously in support of the bill.

Upcoming Hearings of Interest

(N.B. Only bills of interest are flagged. In most cases, committees will be considering other bills as well.)

Senate Health, Human Services, Insurance, and Job Creation

10:00am, Wed., Mar. 5, 411-S.

[SB-232](#). **Contraceptives** (Robson) Prohibits pharmacists from refusing to fill prescriptions for contraceptives, and redefines abortion.

New Bills of Interest

[SB-518](#). **BadgerCare Plus** (Erpenbach) Various changes to BadgerCare Plus. *To Health, Human Services, Insurance and Job Creation.*

SB-531. Charitable Solicitations (Hansen) Posting information about charitable solicitation campaigns performed by professional-fund raisers on the DRL website. *To Commerce, Utilities & Rail.*

AB-879. Milwaukee Choice (Pope-Roberts) Requires licensure of instructional staff in schools participating in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. *To Education Reform.*

AB-881. Charities (Strachota) Reporting requirements for certain charitable organizations. *To State Affairs.*

Web Sites of Interest

<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/waml>

- Who are my legislators

<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/leginfo.html>

- 2007-08 Session Schedule
- Weekly Schedule of Committee Activities
- Senate and Assembly Daily Floor Calendar

Capitol Update is a periodic e-mail on legislative issues from the Wisconsin Catholic Conference. To "subscribe" or "unsubscribe" please send a request to office@wisconsincatholic.org.

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