

# WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

# CAPITOL UPDATE

March 19, 2010

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## Governor Signs Public Defender Bill

Governor Doyle has signed into law [Senate Bill 263](#) as [2009 Wisconsin Act 164](#). The Act updates the financial eligibility requirements for a State Public Defender and makes it possible for more low-income defendants to qualify for legal representation. The WCC [supported](#) the legislation.

## WCC Supports Education Tax Credits

The WCC recently offered written [testimony](#) in support of [Assembly Bill 726](#). The bill allows individuals and corporations to claim a nonrefundable tax credit for charitable contributions made to private school scholarship funds as well as those made to public school academic and physical education programs. The Assembly Committee on Ways and Means has taken no further action on the bill.

## WCC Opposes Unfair Limits on School Transportation

The WCC [testified](#) before the Assembly Committee on Education in opposition to [Assembly Bill 809](#), a bill that would affect private school pupil transportation. AB 809 includes a measure that would restrict transportation funds provided to larger families whose children attend the same school. A family that receives a stipend from the public school district in lieu of transportation services, with two or more children attending the same private school, would be paid a rate as if only one child attended the school. A second provision would require that private schools only receive transportation services from the public school district during the public school's term. The WCC will continue to monitor this legislation and provide updates on its advancement.

## WCC Testifies on Religious Freedom

The WCC provided [testimony](#) for information on [Senate Bill 585](#), which prohibits discrimination against an employee who declines to attend an employer-sponsored meeting or to participate in

any communication with the employer or employer's agent if the purpose is to communicate opinions about religious or political matters. The Committee took no further action on the bill following its public hearing.

## **Senate Holds Hearing on Payday Lending Reform**

The WCC submitted written [testimony](#) for information on [Senate Bill 530](#), aimed at regulating the payday loan industry. The bill's author, Senator Jim Sullivan (D-Wauwatosa), has indicated that he expects to have an amended version of the bill ready for a vote in Committee in the coming weeks.

## **Comments Provided on Livestock Facility Siting Rule**

In written [testimony](#), the WCC urged the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) to amend its administrative rule governing Livestock Facility Siting to allow for greater input by local government. The rule, ATCP 51, governs the establishment or expansion of large livestock operations, also known as "concentrated animal feeding operations" (CAFOs). By law, DATCP is required to revise the rule this year.

## **New Bills of Interest**

[SB-593](#). **SAGE** (Holperin) SAGE program contracts. To Education.

[SB-595](#). **Schools** (Kreitlow) Transportation of private school pupils. To Education.

[SB-596](#). **Schools** (Kreitlow) Transportation aid to school districts. To Education.

[SB-618](#). **Raffles** (Decker) Changes affecting raffle tickets. To Ethics Reform and Government Operations.

[SB-622](#). **Raffles** (Holperin) Changes affecting how number of raffles is counted. To Ethics Reform and Government Operations.

[AB-807](#). **Schools** (Dexter) Transportation aid to school districts. To Education.

[AB-808](#). **Schools** (Dexter) SAGE program contracts. To Education.

[AB-809](#). **Schools** (Dexter) Transportation of private school pupils. To Education.

[AB-822](#). **Juvenile Court** (Legislative Council) Extended juvenile court jurisdiction for certain foster youth under 21. To Corrections and the Courts.

[AB-823](#). **Foster Parents** (Legislative Council) Training for foster parents. To Children and Families.

[AB-824](#). **Foster Parents** (Legislative Council) Creating expectations for foster children and foster parents. To Children and Families.

[AB-825](#). **Family Policy** (Legislative Council) Creates a family policy board; requires counties to provide prevention resources. To Children and Families.

[AB-831](#). **Employer Discrimination** (Van Akkeren) Prohibits discrimination against an employee who declines to attend an employer-sponsored meeting or to participate in any communication with the employer or with an agent, representative or designee of the employer, the primary purpose of which is to communicate the opinion of the employer about religious or political matters. To Labor.

[AB-832](#). **Funeral Expenses** (Turner) Maximum amount of funeral and burial expenses under the funeral, burial and cemetery expenses program. To Urban and Local Affairs.

[AB-839](#). **Sex Contact** (Staskunas) Statute of limitations for sexual contact with a child; limits on recovery against the state and local political subdivisions. To Criminal Justice.

[AB-856](#). **Raffles** (Soletski) Removes a provision which prohibits the sale of raffle tickets without direct contact. To Consumer Protection.

[AB-858](#). **Birth Certificates** (Milroy) Restoration of information from an original birth certificate after adoption. To Children and Families.

[AB-865](#). **MPS Choice** (Davis) Eliminates the cap on the number of pupils who may attend private school under the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. To Education.

## Web Sites of Interest

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

- Who are my legislators

[Directory of Senate Members](#)

[Directory of Assembly Members](#)

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

- 2009-10 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.

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