

WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

CAPITOL UPDATE

October 23, 2009

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WCC Opposes Statutes of Limitations Waiver

Bishop William P. Callahan of Milwaukee and Bishop Jerome E. ListECKI of La Crosse testified in opposition to [Assembly Bill 453](#) before the Assembly Committee on Children and Families. AB 453 would, if passed, temporarily remove the statute of limitations for child sexual abuse cases and permit civil suits, no matter how old, to be brought in court against both alleged perpetrators and their employers. The bill would also permanently remove the statute of limitations for future civil actions.

As stated in Bishop ListECKI's [testimony](#), these bills could significantly affect churches, private and parochial schools, ministries, and other non-profit groups. In his [testimony](#), Bishop Callahan described the various actions taken by the Archdiocese thus far to compassionately serve the victims/survivors of child abuse and reiterated the Church's commitment to protecting children.

Several other opponents to the legislation noted the bill's inherent unfairness. Although the bill would allow suits to be brought by any victim/survivor, the doctrine of "sovereign immunity" bars suits against government bodies for the negligent supervision of their employees, meaning public entities would not be held liable for the same decades old criminal activity of perpetrator employees as those employed by private entities. Also, because there is a cap on damages against government agencies, different victims would not be provided with equal recourse.

Please contact Members of the Legislature and urge opposition to AB 453, and its companion, [Senate Bill 319](#). Please emphasize the inherent inequity of this legislation and its potential impact on parishioners and current Church employees who are not culpable for wrongdoing committed decades ago. To find contact information for your Wisconsin State Representative or Senator, visit our [E-Advocacy](#) webpage and enter your zip code, or call the State Legislative Hotline, 1-800-362-9472.

USCCB Calls for Action on Federal Health Care Reform

On Friday, October 9, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) distributed an [Action Alert](#) calling on Catholics to urge their Members of Congress to improve current health care reform legislation. The Alert provides distinct messages for Catholics regarding what action to

request respectively from Representatives and Senators regarding abortion funding and conscience rights:

- For the SENATE: “During floor debate on the health care reform bill, please support a floor amendment to incorporate longstanding policies against abortion funding and in favor of conscience rights. The final bill should be opposed until these serious concerns are addressed.”
- For the HOUSE: “ Support the Stupak Amendment that addresses pro-life concerns on abortion funding and conscience rights and a Rule on the health care bill that allows Members to vote on the amendment. If these serious concerns are not fixed, the final bill should be opposed until they are addressed.”

In addition to protections for conscience rights and against abortion funding, the USCCB has identified the following criteria as essential components to health care reform:

- Adopt measures that protect and improve people’s health care. Reform should make quality healthcare affordable and accessible to everyone, particularly those who are poor and vulnerable.
- Include effective measures to safeguard the health of immigrants, their children and all of society. Ensure that legal immigrants and their family members have comprehensive, affordable, and timely access to health care coverage. Maintain an adequate safety net for those who remain uncovered.

The U.S. Senate Finance Committee recently advanced health care reform legislation, meaning both the House of Representatives and the Senate are posed to vote on the matter in the coming weeks.

WCC Update readers are urged to contact their Congressional representatives and reiterate the criteria for reform outlined in the Action Alert. You can contact your Representative and Senators through the U.S. Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121. You can also find information on your Members of Congress at www.senate.gov and www.house.gov.

For more information, visit <http://www.usccb.org/healthcare/>.

Upcoming Hearings of Interest

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

Assembly Health and Healthcare Reform

11:30am, Wed., Oct. 28, 417-N

[AB-512](#). Health Insurance (Pasch) Health insurance coverage of nervous and mental disorders, alcoholism and other drug abuse problems.

Senate Education

9:30am, Thu., Oct. 29, 201-SE

[SB-324](#). **Sex Education** (Taylor) Providing instruction in human growth and development.

Senate Judiciary, Corrections, Insurance, Campaign, Finance Reform, and Housing

10:35am, Thu., Oct. 29, 411-S

[SB-325](#). **Sex Offenders** (Kreitlow) Notification to a parent before chaperoning a sex offender.

New Bills of Interest

[AB-483](#). **Minors' Employment** (Sinicki) Employment of minors 12 and older by non-profit organizations in and around homes of elderly persons and persons with disabilities to perform snow shoveling, lawn mowing, leaf raking and other similar work. To Labor.

[AB-485](#). **Child Care** (Dexter) Required judicial findings and orders when a child is placed outside the home, termination of parental rights warnings, mandatory child abuse or neglect reporters, confidentiality of social services records, changing from day care to child care the term used to describe care and supervision for children for less than 24 hours a day. To Children & Families.

[AB-486](#). **Child Care** (Dexter) Various changes affecting child care, child health care, and outside home placements. To Children & Families.

[AB-497](#). **Extended Supervision** (Legislative Council) Maximum term of extended supervision. To Corrections & Courts.

[AB-498](#). **Prison Time** (Legislative Council) Time spent in prison after revocation of parole or extended supervision. To Corrections & Courts.

[AB-499](#). **Community Supervision** (Legislative Council) Community supervision services in the Department of Corrections. To Corrections & Courts.

[AB-510](#). **Foster Care** (Pasch) Monthly foster care rates; levels of care; licensing of kinship care relatives to operate foster homes; time limits on receipt of kinship care payments; and licensing of foster homes across county lines. To Children & Families.

[AB-512](#). **Health Insurance** (Pasch) Health insurance coverage of nervous and mental disorders, alcoholism, and other drug abuse problems. To Health & Healthcare Reform.

[SB-313](#). **Schools and Day Care** (Legislative Council) Physical fitness assessments, school nutrition, and quality-rating system for day care centers. To Education.

[SB-315](#). **Extended Supervision** (Legislative Council) Maximum term of extended supervision. To Judiciary.

[SB-316](#). **Prison Time** (Legislative Council) Time spent in prison after revocation of parole or extended supervision. To Judiciary.

[SB-317](#). **Community Supervision** (Legislative Council) Community supervision services in the Department of Corrections. To Judiciary.

[SB-325](#). **Sex Offenders** (Kreitlow) Notification to a parent before chaperoning a sex offender. To Judiciary.

[SB-346](#). **Child Care** (Jauch) Required judicial findings and orders when a child is placed outside the home, termination of parental rights warnings, mandatory child abuse or neglect reporters, confidentiality of social services records, changing from day care to child care the term used to describe care and supervision for children for less than 24 hours a day. To Children & Families.

[SB-347](#). **Child Care** (Jauch) Various changes affecting child care, child health care, and outside home placements. To Children & Families.

[SB-349](#). **Minor Employment** (Plale) Allows employment of minors 12 and older by non-profit organizations in and around the homes of elderly persons and persons with disabilities to perform snow shoveling, lawn mowing, leaf raking and other similar work usual to those homes. To Children & Families and Workforce Development.

[SB-361](#). **Foster Care** (Jauch) Monthly rates paid for foster care; levels of care; licensing of kinship care relatives to operate foster homes; time limits on receipt of kinship care payments; and licensing of foster homes across county lines. To Children & Families.

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.

Wisconsin Catholic Conference
131 W. Wilson St., Suite 1105
Madison, WI 53703
608/257-0004

www.wisconsinatholic.org
office@wisconsinatholic.org