

WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

CAPITOL UPDATE

November 6, 2009

Contents Include:

1. Advocacy on Health Care Reform Still Timely
2. Bill to Revamp Sex Education Slowed Until 2010
3. WCC Backs Parity for Mental Illness and Substance Abuse
4. No Action on Window Legislation This Year
5. Legislature in Recess Until January
6. Upcoming Hearings of Interest
7. New Bills of Interest
8. Websites of Interest

Advocacy on Health Care Reform Still Timely

The House of Representatives remains poised to act on federal health care legislation with Senate action possible some time in the coming weeks. There is still time to contact Members of Congress and assert your support for the bishops' [message](#) on health care. Please act now!

Bill to Revamp Sex Education Slowed Until 2010

[Assembly Bill 458](#), which takes control of sex education curriculum from local school boards and advisory committees and mandates that districts which offer education use a comprehensive curriculum, passed the Assembly this week on a vote of 48 to 43. The WCC [testified](#) in opposition to it and its Senate companion bill at a public hearing in October and provided a [press release](#) regarding this action. The WCC also issued a [press release](#) responding to Planned Parenthood's criticism of the bill's opponents.

The Senate is likely to consider the bill in January when the Legislature reconvenes. The WCC urges readers to contact their Senators to ask them not to advance the bill. To find contact information for your Wisconsin State Senator, visit the WCC's [E-Advocacy](#) webpage and enter your zip code, or call the State Legislative Hotline, 1-800-362-9472.

WCC Backs Parity for Mental Illness and Substance Abuse

On October 28, the WCC testified in support of [Assembly Bill 512](#), which enhances health insurance coverage requirements in Wisconsin for mental illness and substance abuse. The bill will ensure that those who work for businesses with 50 or fewer employees who suffer from these conditions receive the same care and treatment as those who have physical health issues.

In her [testimony](#) before the Assembly Committee on Health and Healthcare Reform, WCC Associate Director Kim Wadas noted, “The human person is more than a physical body. Our human nature blends the physical with the intellectual and spiritual. The latter two may be harder to quantify, but are no less deserving of our attention. Further, each of us possesses an innate dignity with which, in the words of the Founders, we are endowed by the Creator. This human dignity is present even when one is physically, mentally, or emotionally afflicted.”

The WCC will offer similar testimony in support of AB 512’s Senate companion bill, [Senate Bill 362](#), before the Senate Committee on Health, Health Insurance, Privacy, Property Tax Relief, and Revenue at a public hearing this coming Tuesday.

No Action on Window Legislation This Year

The Legislature adjourned for the year without taking action on [Assembly Bill 453](#) or [Senate Bill 319](#). Both bills would set aside the statute of limitations for three years to permit people who were sexually abused as children to sue those responsible. As reported in the last edition of the *Update*, the WCC opposes both bills and Bishops Callahan and ListECKi testified against them at a public hearing in October.

Legislature in Recess Until January

The Legislature yesterday ended its scheduled floor sessions for 2009. Regular sessions will resume January 19, 2010. However, legislators may return before the end of the year in special session. Legislative committees will continue to meet and hold hearings.

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, Health Insurance, Privacy, Property Tax Relief, and Revenue 10 am, Tue., Nov. 10, 411-S

[SB-362](#). **Health Insurance** (Hansen) Health insurance coverage of nervous and mental disorders, alcoholism, and other drug abuse.

Senate Judiciary, Corrections, Insurance, Campaign Finance Reform, and Housing 10 am, Tue., Nov. 10, 201-SE

[SB-384](#). **Spiritual Treatments** (Taylor) defense to criminal prosecutions for a parent or guardian for using spiritual treatment in lieu of medical treatment on a child; election of Christian Science treatment for a child in lieu of medical or surgical treatment for the cure of disease.

Senate Small Business, Emergency Preparedness, Technical Colleges, and Consumer Protection

11 am, Tue., Nov. 10, 201-SE

[SB-271](#). **Bisphenol** (Lassa) Prohibits manufacture and sale at wholesale of certain baby bottles and cups for children containing bisphenol A; labeling requirements.

Assembly Committee on Aging and Long-Term Care

10 am, Thu., Nov. 12, 400-NE

Information on the Family Care Program. Testimony from invited speakers.

Assembly Criminal Justice

10 am, Thu., Nov. 12, 328-NW

[AB-503](#). **Exposure** (Staskunas) Penalties for exposure to a minor.

Senate Health, Health Insurance, Privacy, Property Tax Relief, and Revenue

11 am, Tue., Nov. 17, 412-E

Information on the BadgerCare Plus Core Plan. Testimony from invited speakers.

New Bills of Interest

[SB-362](#). **Health Insurance** (Hansen) Health insurance coverage of nervous and mental disorders, alcoholism, and other drug abuse. To Health.

[SB-380](#). **Firearms** (Taylor) Prohibits possession of a firearm by a person who has committed a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence. To Judiciary.

[SB-384](#). **Spiritual Treatments** (Taylor) defense to criminal prosecutions for a parent or guardian for using spiritual treatment in lieu of medical treatment on a child; election of Christian Science treatment for a child in lieu of medical or surgical treatment for the cure of disease. To Judiciary.

[AB 503](#). **Exposure** (Staskunas) Exposure to a minor and providing a penalty. To Criminal Justice.

[AB-539](#). **Health Care** (Vukmir) Disclosure of information by health care providers, insurers and governmental self-insured plans; requires acceptance by a health care provider of a payment amount in certain circumstances. To Health and Health Care Reform.

[AB-540](#). **Health Insurers** (Vukmir) Allows out-of-state insurers to offer health care plans that are exempt from certain laws to employers and individuals in Wisconsin. To Health and Health Care Reform.

[AB-541](#). **Domestic Abuse** (Vruwink) Allows use of substitute address for a victim of domestic abuse. To State Affairs and Homeland Security.

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