



WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

TO: Representative Jerry O'Connor, Chair
Members, Assembly Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Tia Izzia, Associate Director

DATE: October 1, 2025

RE: Support for Assembly Bill 373, Stillbirth Tax Credit

The Wisconsin Catholic Conference (WCC), the public policy voice of the Catholic bishops of Wisconsin, strongly supports Assembly Bill 373, which creates a refundable individual income tax credit of \$2,000 that may be claimed by the parents of a stillborn child.

Every October, our nation recognizes Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month, but much of society does not know how to react or help those who have faced the loss of a baby. When a family loses a child to stillbirth, it is a devastating experience often coupled with confusion and isolation. Parents' hopes and dreams quickly turn from joy to unthinkable sorrow. The process is made more painful by having to inform friends and family of the death of a child, returning home to an empty crib, and dealing with the reality of mounting healthcare and funeral expenses.

When a family experiences a stillbirth, as one mother wrote, "There are often no memorials, no flowers, or notes of condolence...." There may be no help and little acknowledgement. In creating a stillborn tax credit, Assembly Bill 373 provides a formal acknowledgement to grieving families that the State of Wisconsin recognizes the loss they have suffered with the death of their child. This acknowledgement comes through a compassionate offer of assistance, a means to help families cope with the mounting challenges they face with such devastating loss.

Given that many families experience the loss of a child earlier during pregnancy, we would request that Assembly Bill 373 be amended to include the unintentional loss of a child prior to the 20 week or 350 grams weight standard that triggers a fetal death report under current law. With the loss of a child earlier in pregnancy the experience of the family is the same – the same love, the same grief, and frequently many of the same health and related costs. Therefore, these families should be provided with access to the same resources.

As Pope Francis once said, "Every child born is the promise of a life which once again reveals itself to be stronger than death" (*General Audience*, September 20, 2017). Assembly Bill 373 is one important way to memorialize this life, provide comfort to those in sorrow, and provide practical assistance to families.

We urge your support for Assembly Bill 373. Thank you.