



## WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

TO: Representative Patrick Snyder, Chair  
Members, Assembly Committee on Children & Families

FROM: Tia Izzia, Associate Director for Human Life & Social Concerns

DATE: November 1, 2023

RE: Support for AB-336 Adoption Grants and AB-369 Newborn Infant Safety Devices

---

The Wisconsin Catholic Conference (WCC), the public policy voice of the Catholic bishops of Wisconsin, urges you to support Assembly Bill 336, creating a grant program for financial assistance for adoption, and Assembly Bill 369, authorizing newborn infant safety devices under the safe haven law.

### ***AB-336 Adoption Grants***

As a society, every effort should be made to keep families united and to offer parents the resources needed to support their children. However, when extraordinary needs or circumstances persist, adoption can provide a needed avenue for parents to place their children in a stable and loving home. If a woman chooses to place her child for adoption, there should be no doubt in her mind that there is a family that can welcome and raise her child.

However, for the many families willing and eager to adopt, the cost of adoption is often a steep barrier. For this reason, SB-346 creates an Adoption Financial Assistance Grant Program to make adoption a more affordable option for all Wisconsin families. Awards are limited to \$10,000 per family and may only be awarded to or on behalf of families in this state who are adopting children in this state. One does not have to be affluent to be a good parent. Grants such as these can make the process far more affordable and humane. In the words of Pope Francis, “How many children in the world are waiting for someone to take care of them! And how many married couples want to be fathers and mothers but are unable to do so for biological reasons; or, although they already have children, they want to share their family’s affection with those who do not have it. We should not be afraid to choose the path of adoption, to take the ‘risk’ of welcoming children.”

### ***AB-369 Newborn Infant Safety Devices***

While as a society, we must always work to ensure that women and their children can remain united and receive the help they need to flourish, we know that there are women in complex circumstances who will decide to relinquish their child after giving birth. This has always been the case throughout history. Today, these circumstances might include an unsafe home environment, drug use, domestic abuse, fear of entanglement with law enforcement, and other difficult situations. SB-369 provides women with a last resort and anonymous option to ensure their own safety and that of their child. Additionally, newborn infant safety devices keep vulnerable infants safe because they are cared for immediately by trained professionals. This bill is in keeping with the bipartisan 2001 safe haven law, which came out of

the Speaker's Task Force on Abandoned Babies. The Wisconsin Catholic Conference, along with Planned Parenthood, and many others supported this much-needed service.

---

These two bills are part and parcel of embracing both mother and child. They save the lives of children and give them a chance to flourish. They give birth mothers the security of knowing that their children will find love and stability.

Even as we strongly support these bills, the WCC will continue to push for proposals that ensure that mothers can remain united with their children and that both can thrive. There are many more proposals that get us closer to this goal: expanding postpartum care, reducing costs for birth, eliminating racial disparities in maternal and infant mortality, supporting birth mothers after adoption, removing sales tax on feminine hygiene products and baby supplies, increasing the tax exemption for dependents, funding for pregnancy resource centers, and more.

Together, we can and must build an economy and society in Wisconsin where women and children can flourish. For all these reasons, we urge you to pass Assembly Bills 336 and 369.