

1997-98 SESSION
COMMITTEE HEARING
RECORDS

Committee Name:

Joint Committee on
Finance (JC-Fi)

Sample:

Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

- 05hrAC-EdR_RCP_pt01a
- 05hrAC-EdR_RCP_pt01b
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- Appointments ... Appt
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JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE

PUBLIC HEARING ON 1997-99 STATE BUDGET

April 16, 1997

Testimony presented by
Carol W. Medaris
Wisconsin Council on Children and Families

There are several policy issues raised in the governor's proposed budget which relate to the implementation of Wisconsin Works. The following are suggested changes to make the program more workable and more fair to participants.

1. The bill specifies a dispute resolution process which falls far short of the current fair hearing process. (DWD Economic Support and Child Care #7.)¹ The bill expands the issues which may be reviewed, but provides a right only to a local agency review -- the same agency that made the initial decision. Participants may request a second-step review to the Department, but such a review need not be provided. Participants are thus denied the right to an impartial decision-maker, as well as other standard due process protections such as the right to testify under oath, to call witnesses, to question agency workers under oath, and to have an advocate present. Furthermore, the proposed procedure denies continuing benefits pending a hearing to those who appeal benefit cuts right away, as is the case now. In addition, retroactive benefits are denied participants who succeed in getting decisions reversed which unfairly denied them placement in an employment program.

All of these protections are guaranteed in a line of U.S. Supreme Court welfare cases going back to Goldberg v. Kelly. The current process not only works well, but is consistent with these due process protections, affording a fair, impartial, and consistent decision-making process no matter where in the state you reside.

In addition, current fair hearing procedures are retained for the Medical Assistance and Food Stamp programs. Since participants may face denials in W-2 work programs and Medical Assistance or Food Stamps simultaneously (for example for failure to cooperate with the child support program or ineligibility because of income or assets), setting up two systems will result in unnecessary duplication and may result in

¹ Department and section numbers refer to sections of the Fiscal Bureau's Summary of the Governor's budget recommendations.

inconsistent decisions. W-2 work program participants should be afforded the same due process protections afforded beneficiaries of other government programs, such as Unemployment Compensation or Social Security and SSI.

2. The bill contains a new child support assignment requirement for those participating in W-2 work programs or receiving a child care subsidy. (DWD Economic Support and Child Care #4.) The language allows, but does not require, that assigned child support be redirected to recipients. This runs directly counter to legislative intent in the original bill last year that child care must go directly to recipients. Federal law requires such an assignment, but the state has received a waiver to redirect the funds to recipients except for families assigned to a control group whose child support would stay with the state. The bill language should be changed to require that all child support assigned to the state be redirected to the families except for those in the control group.
3. The bill raises the level of payments for those in Community Service Jobs and Transitional Placements to approximate new federal minimum wage rates, but without calling the grants "wages." (DWD Economic Support and Child Care #3.) The language should be changed to reference the minimum wage specifically in order that, with other minor changes, participants may qualify for the federal Earned Income Tax Credit. This is particularly appropriate for those working in Community Service Jobs.

In addition, participants in Transitional Placements should be eligible for the same level of payments as those in Community Service Jobs. The differential in the current statute unfairly disadvantages families with disabled household members and may also run counter to protections afforded disabled persons by federal law.

4. The bill provides that Food Stamp funds would be used to subsidize W-2 trial jobs, without specifying that recipients would not be disadvantaged by this system. (DWD Economic Support and Child Care #25d.) The Department seems to intend that W-2 trial job workers would not be disadvantaged either in their rate of pay or in the amount of food stamp benefits provided as compared with a non-W-2 worker with the same family circumstances. That is not how the statutory section reads, however. The statute needs to be redrafted to make it clear that W-2 trial job participants will receive all the food stamp benefits to which their income entitles them in addition to full wages for the employment position.

5. The bill limits Learnfare sanctions to those under 18, and then limits child care while finishing high school to this age group, as well. (DWD Economic Support and Child Care #8.) Learnfare should finally be put to rest. It has no place in this "real world-real work" model. It has not been shown to have achieved any of its goals. And, since teens are not eligible for a cash grant anyway, retaining Learnfare can only discourage them from living at home. Their parents receive no financial incentive for keeping them at home and can only lose a portion of their W-2 wages if the teen fail to attend school regularly.

In addition, it makes no sense at all to deny child care to 18 and 19-year-olds in low-income families that are trying to finish a high school education. That should be changed to clearly provide eligibility for child care to all low-income teens while they are completing a high school degree.

6. The bill provides that SSI parents are only eligible for a \$77 per child monthly benefit. (DHFS Children and Family Services and Supportive Living #6.) This compares to \$215 per child provided to relatives caring for children. Unlike other families, SSI recipients are unlikely to have any means to supplement their income, since by definition they are incapable of substantial gainful employment. A disabled mother, with \$567 per month, is well below the poverty level. Adding a child or two at \$77 per month per child pushes her deeper into poverty. If her disability is truly permanent, she and her children are held to this subsistence level until the children are grown. There is no reason to provide less to these families than to families caring for relatives' children. It doesn't cost a disabled parent any less to raise children than it does other parents, nor should we doom families headed by disabled parents to greater poverty than all other families.

EDITORIAL SECTION

The Capital Times ■ Thursday, May 9, 1996

Guest column

ANNE ARNESEN

W-2 kills off a fair hearing

"Play fair!"

This is a parent's admonition to young children as they tussle over a coveted toy, but fairness is not just a kids game (or child's play), nor has it ever been.

Fair play is a concept we work hard to teach our kids — an American value central to our being.

As Americans we have never liked arbitrary decisions by despots, dictators, kings or government agencies. We have a culture that is strongly infused with the concept that one ought to get a fair hearing.

Citizens who believe the tax assessor has wrongly valued their property may appear before a board and appeal the assessment.

If one finds that Social Security benefits are wrong or one is denied a license to operate a business or drive a car, there is a process to protest the governmental decision.

One has recourse to a fair hearing. It's democracy at work.

Our quest to treat people fairly has also applied to the rules for poor people.

Under laws governing Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), medical assistance and food stamps, a person has recourse to a fair hearing procedure if there is reason to believe one is being arbitrarily denied access to aid.

What does a fair hearing process involve?

Hearings are not very complex, lasting an average of only 20 to 50 minutes. For AFDC clients it means a state hearing officer takes sworn testimony from county workers and petitioners, examines the documents submitted by both parties and makes a decision based upon a complete record.

Disabled children who are de-

nied educational services also go through the same type of process. Most petitioners represent themselves, although they can request a lawyer. There is a 45-day limit for requesting a hearing. The system has never been clogged, but the process is there, if needed, and it is all part of playing fair.

Now along comes Wisconsin Works, W-2.

Like AFDC, government workers or private agency workers (under a government contract) will make a multitude of decisions about the provision of basic necessities of life for people who apply for the W-2 program — mostly single women with children.

Among the main decisions to be made: child care, health care, disability determinations and placement in a work category in order to be eligible for a grant.

Unlike AFDC, in W-2 there is no provision for a fair hearing.

What the Legislature adopted, after rejecting a fair hearing process, was a paper review of a worker's decision by the W-2 agency and the state agency (the new Department of Job Development) to see if the right law was applied.

Even this minimal process is provided only for work program decisions.

W-2's provisions are not a fair hearing. A true fair hearing occurs when the facts and evidence found through an investigation show that a client's claim is true or false. Quite a different process.

The leadership of the legislative Joint Finance Committee argued against an appeal process, claiming it would mire the W-2 system in red tape and overwhelm agencies with appeals. This rationale is astonishing.

We have had a fair hearing sys-

tem in place for years, and only a small percentage of decisions are appealed. In fact, in 1995 with over 60,000 families on AFDC, only 2,000 requests were received, half of which merited a hearing.

But the most serious issue is that poor people will be denied the right to a fair hearing now that W-2 has passed and there is no recourse for the poor.

The lack of a fair hearing in W-2 is exacerbated by the enormous discretion allocated to W-2 workers at the lowest level, financial employment planners.

Flexibility for financial employment planners to make decisions based on an individual's circumstances may be desirable, but it only works if there is recourse when a client believes she or he has been treated unfairly.

A financial employment planner, for instance, could require a woman to go into a community service job when she claims she must be in the transitional program to stay home with her child who has asthma and needs more medical supervision than a child care center can provide.

Or perhaps a woman misses work and is dropped from the program, but she claims her child care or transportation arrangements fell through. With no fair hearing process she has no way to make her case beyond the financial employment planner and the state department.

W-2 in Wisconsin is called a "work in progress." True progress will be achieved if a fair hearing process is adopted. Only then will Wisconsin be promoting fair play for all of its citizens . . . not just the economically advantaged.

Anne Arnesen is director of Wisconsin Council on Children and Families Inc.

My name is Bob Selchert. I am here today representing Wisconsin Rural Water Assn. This association is made up of over 400 cities, towns, villages and sanitary districts, throughout our state with population of under 10,000 people. We are here to encourage your support for the Governor's budget, especially for the State Revolving Fund(SRF) provided to Wisconsin by the passing of the Safe Drinking Water Act(SDWA) last year by the federal government.

The State of Wisconsin is eligible to receive around 41 million from the federal government through the State Revolving fund. The State of Wisconsin is required to provide for matching funding, down the road, to support and maintain this (SRF) State Revolving Fund and for Wisconsin to get the maximum dollars for this program from the federal government.

We especially want to see the 2% set aside for technical assistance included in this budget. This provides for small systems throughout our state to receive on site technical assistance, to meet the new requirements of the (SDWA) Safe Drinking Water Act. This may be the only way many small systems may get any benefit from this State Revolving Fund. We would like to also see the 15% of SRF fund guaranteed to small systems raised, so that more financially strapped small systems can get loans and grants for their water system improvements.

Again we encourage your support for the Governor's budget concerning the (SRF) State Revolving Fund, so that the Dept. of Natural Resources can get on with the IUP (Intended use plan, and submit it to the EPA for approval and the program can get started in our State.

Thank you.

Wisconsin Underwater Archeology Association

PO Box 6081 • Madison, Wisconsin 53716

Joint Finance Committee
State Capital Building
Madison, WI 53701

April 2, 1997

Dear Sirs:

The Wisconsin Underwater Archeology Association (WUAA) is a state-wide group of recreational scuba divers interested in the study and preservation of the state's underwater history and cultural resources.

It has come to our attention that the upcoming state budget calls for reductions in the funding for the State Historical Society (SHS) which may result in the elimination of certain programs. Our group has worked with the SHS Underwater Archeology Program for six years and feels that the state of Wisconsin cannot afford to lose such a worthwhile program.

The Underwater Archeology Program is important, we feel, because:

It has developed a program to define and preserve our rich underwater heritage.

It has conducted archeology field projects with active participation by volunteer sport divers.

It has assisted WUAA in their projects, guiding them toward professional results.

It has assisted in archeological workshops for sport divers. Educating them in proper mapping and reporting techniques along with the importance of on site preservation rather than artifact removal.

It has been active in providing legislation for the protection of our underwater heritage.

WUAA feels strongly that the Underwater Archeology Program has made a significant impact on the preservation and understanding of the state's underwater resources. By becoming involved with groups like ours, most recreational divers are now aware of the importance of our underwater heritage and of preserving it.

The Wisconsin Underwater Archeology Association requests that funding for the State Historical Society not be reduced and that programs such as the Underwater Archeology Program be maintained.

Sincerely,



Thomas Villand, President

Joint Committee on Finance
Senate Bill 77/ Assembly Bill 100- Governor's 1997-99 executive budget bill
Legislative Hearing April 16, 1997

Alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) problems are democratic; they cross all educational, ethnic, economic lines.

Prevention education begins at home, and is supported in the schools with AODA, Safety and Wellness Curriculum

Besides parents, teachers are the most significant people in the lives of children

Citizens in our communities identify schools as where they want to receive prevention education

Community and parent surveys rate parent satisfaction with school-based alcohol and drug prevention efforts very high

Hamilton AWARE pulls all the stakeholders together to address the alcohol and other drug issue efficiently, comprehensively

- Schools facilitate school community alcohol and other drug prevention task forces
example: Hamilton AWARE
- Schools unite area communities
example: Lisbon, Butler, Sussex, Colgate, Lannon, Pewaukee & Menomonee Falls
- Schools are the heart of every community
- **Schools are where the youth are**
- Schools are where parents turn
- Schools provide parent training, consultation, referrals services
- Schools provide education, screening, referral, follow up services for students
 - Alcohol use was down in our last survey
 - Kids drinking and driving rate is down
 - Kids riding with friends who have been drinking is down
 - More students are actively providing leadership in the area of drug prevention
 - We identify kids who need help and refer to community agencies

Current grant monies allow us to support positive, successful Student Programming:

Student Retreats: Green Bean Campaign
Students Respecting Students Campaign
Teen Dance at the local Teen Center
Adopt A Senior Program
Tree of Life Program
Anti-Smoking Activities
Teacher Training
Material, computer software, to support the curriculum
Parent To Parent Classes
Hamilton AWARE brochure "What Every Parent Should Know" about AODA
Coordination of "Work Service Day" with local churches
Annual Red Ribbon Campaigns

Please support drug education in your schools. Please do not destroy the coordinated system program they we have diligently created in the interest of Wisconsin youth and their families. It takes time and effort to develop trust and good prevention programming. **Please consider my presentation as rationale for keeping School AODA Funding at DPI. Keep grant dollars together to assure coordination. Thank you.**

Pre sented by: Paula Crandall Decker, MSSW
Hamilton AWARE Chairperson

Phone (414) 246-1803

April 16, 1997

Members of the Joint Finance Committee:

Hello, my name is Anh Ly and I am a student at the University of Wisconsin - Madison. I am here today to urge you to appropriate money in the budget for the academic advising initiative for the UW system. Quality academic advising is an essential input towards an education at UW-Madison. With the numbers that the UW-Madison campus has, in terms of people, class options, schools and colleges, pre-requisites and requirements, it is difficult and confusing to know for certain if you, as a student, are on the correct path towards a degree in your major. For this reason, students require competent and qualified advisors in sufficient numbers. From personal experience, I have found there are just not enough advisors to go around. I am an undergraduate political science major and I know that there is only one undergraduate political science advisor for some nine hundred or so undergraduate political science majors. There is an absurd waiting list to make an appointment. If were to make an appointment today, I probably could not get in to see the advisor for months. That is just unacceptable. Being able to get "in and out" in four years requires that I know what classes I need to take and when I need to take them for my major. That is part of the job of an advisor. Better academic advising would assure that I can receive my degree most efficiently and that I can, therefore, become a productive and active member of society as soon as possible. Once again, I strongly encourage you to consider fully funding the UW system in the budget, especially allotting money for the academic advising initiative. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



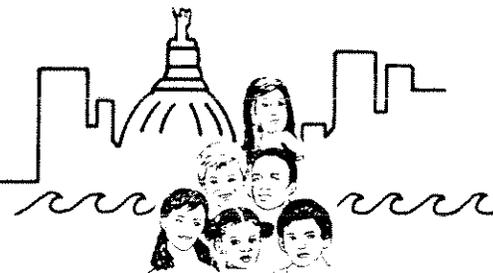
Anh B. Ly
727 Chadbourne
420 N Park Street
Madison WI 53706

Madison Metropolitan School District

Cheryl H. Wilhoyte, Ph.D., Superintendent

MILTON MCPIKE, Principal
VERA RILEY, Assistant Principal
LARRY SANDOR, Assistant Principal
LOUIS SWEDARSKY, Assistant Principal
LEE THOMAS, Assistant Principal

MADISON EAST HIGH SCHOOL
SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE



2222 EAST WASHINGTON AVENUE
MADISON, WISCONSIN 53704-5295
TELEPHONE: 246-4400
FAX: 246-4888

TO: Members of the Joint Committee of Finance

RE: Senate Bill 77/Assembly Bill 100 -- Governor's executive budget bill

From: Priscilla S. Bondhus *PSB*

While I agree conceptually with the importance of education for employment and the school to work initiative, I am concerned about possible consequences that would occur with the transfer of power and fiscal control to the new department of work force development. Some concerns are:

1. Would the new department be approachable and user friendly? The present support my programs have received from the D.P.I. have been excellent.

2. The learning experiences the vocational student organizations provide students affords a breadth and depth in their development that transcends far beyond the focus of work only. When you split these students into different facilities, how would these different opportunities be provided. Who would provide the leadership for these learning experiences.

3. What would be the financial consequences relating to good programs that are in place? Example: A nursing assistant program is being piloted for the Madison Metropolitan School District as East High School. While major donations to establish the program came from the health care industry, school to work funds complemented the donations in establishing the program. We will be pinning the second Nursing Assistant Class this spring and I am proud to say that the model set for the program is economical. The additional cost to the district is less than \$100.00 dollars per student to prepare them for becoming a registered nursing assistant. This cost is supported by out of district funding. This program has been the focus of both national and state recognition.

4. Do we need another layer of bureaucracy?

I have listed a few concerns related to the proposed changes. As a vocational educator, I can assure you that there are more. Yes, school to work and education for employment are most important but let's not throw the baby out with the bath water.

4/16/97

Dear Joint Finance Committee,

We are here today to urge the Joint Finance Committee to include the 105% flexibility in the budget.

We would like to start out by thanking the Governor for proposing a student-friendly budget and encourage the Joint Finance Committee to also keep in mind the importance of a quality education during the biennial budget process.

The 105% flexibility, which supports the "Differential Tuition Initiative" and other flexibilities is a necessary tool needed to continue the quality instruction provided by the University of Wisconsin System.

‡

Over the past couple decades, state support of the UW-System has declined immensely. This decline in state support along with increasing costs has decreased the quality of instruction that the UW-System could offer.

There is opposition to this flexibility by people who say that the responsibility of funding the UW-System would be shifted from the state to the students. I understand that the ideal situation would be to increase the state's contribution, but I do not see this happening any time soon. In the mean time, I do not want to see the quality of my instruction decreasing each year.

Revenue flexibility is the next best thing that would benefit students. Each year our tuition goes up, but we see very few, if any, increased benefits on campus. The revenue generated would stay on campus.

The revenue raised on our campus would be spent to enhance: classroom projects, laboratories, work experiences, and access to our laboratories and our library.

Recent budget cuts and the increased minimum wage rates have resulted in less technical support and maintenance for Stout's laboratories. As a result, our laboratories and library have had to close earlier.

Revenue flexibility would provide funding for additional technicians to staff our laboratories, assist faculty with course material preparation, assist students with writing projects and also keep the equipment functioning. Our library and laboratories would be able to stay open longer. This is very important considering many students are forced to work during the school year and can not go to the library or laboratories during the day. I know what it is like to walk to a laboratory at night and find out that it is closed. I have had many instances when the laboratories have been closed and I have not been able to complete my assignments. This initiative could provide funding to keep the library and laboratories open longer. It also could provide additional jobs for students.

The University of Wisconsin - Stout believes strongly in learning through involvement. Our classroom environment involves small group activities, team projects, one-on-one monitoring, and community-based service projects. However, recent budget cuts have resulted in a restructuring of teaching assignments with faculty teaching larger classes. As a result of larger classes, there is less time spent with individual students, fewer writing assignments, and fewer team projects. Differential Tuition could provide funds for additional teaching assistants and graduate assistants.

Revenue flexibility could also be used to help give the faculty in the UW-System their much deserved raise. Even though my tuition would increase, I support giving the faculty a raise. I want quality faculty giving me instruction. If the faculty do not receive a salary increase, I fear that some may leave the UW System and go to higher paying institutions.

The 105% flexibility needs to be included in the budget, or we can not have Differential Tuition or other flexibilities on our campus. I urge you to include the 105% flexibility in the final budget.

I would also like to ask that the WHEG grant program be increased at the same rate as tuition. Over one in six students on my campus receive this grant.

We would like to once again thank the Governor for his proposed budget and ask that education remains a priority in Wisconsin.

Thank you for your time.



John Houdek
Director of Legislative Affairs
Stout Student Association
University of Wisconsin-Stout



Sara Rasque
Student Senator
Stout Student Association
University of Wisconsin-Stout

DOMESTIC ABUSE PROGRAM FUNDING

Wisconsin Biennial Budget Request 1997-1999

Accessible Crisis Services in Every County for Every Victim

Continuous services include advocacy, counseling (including support groups), transportation as needed, referral, follow-up, outreach and community education. The program must provide twenty-four hour crisis call coverage and have on-site services at the designated location at least forty hours per week. Primary administrative support should be, when possible, in existing domestic abuse programs.

The Governor has proposed spending available domestic abuse assessment revenue to fund eight new programs of this type. Federal funding through the Violence Against Women Act will fund three new programs. **The following funding must be available to assure services are available in the remaining counties and tribes:**

28 programs @ \$30,000 = \$ 840,000

Programs for Under-Served Populations

Wisconsin is home to populations of victims of domestic abuse and their children who, because of race, language barriers, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, culture and/or geographic location, have not had access to domestic abuse services. To begin to remedy this situation, the state must fund at least two local programs designed by and for under-served populations. A half-time staff person would be available to provide basic crisis services and advocacy.

2 programs @ \$39,000 = \$ 78,000

Various under-served populations reside in small clusters throughout Wisconsin. To serve this group efficiently and effectively, a comprehensive statewide approach must be taken. It is proposed that the state fund:

1 statewide program @\$100,000 = \$100,000

Children's Services

Currently, the state provides no funding for specialized services for children except \$145,000 earmarked for special demonstration projects. Services for children from violent homes must include assessments, orientation, individual counseling, age appropriate education (including dating violence), referral, follow up, support groups, safety planning and community education and outreach. The state funding necessary to achieve this goal is:

48 programs @ \$30,000 =	\$1,440,000
8 programs @ 12,000 =	96,000*

*Eight domestic abuse programs receive approximately \$18,000 each to provide children's services. An additional \$95,000 is needed to bring these programs up to the standard level of funding.

Summary

28 non-shelter crisis service programs @	\$ 30,000 =	\$ 840,000
2 programs serving under-served populations @	39,000 =	78,000
1 statewide program for under-served populations @	100,000 =	100,000
48 programs @	30,000 =	1,440,000
8 programs @	12,000 =	96,000

Total annual funding needed	\$2,554,000
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Total Biennial Budget Request	\$3,831,000
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Counties Currently Without Continuous Programs

Adams	Florence	Marquette	Trempeleau
Barron	Forest	Monroe	Vilas
Bayfield	Green Lake	Oconto	Washburn
Buffalo	Iowa	Pepin	Waupaca
Burnett	Jackson	Price	Waushara
Calumet	Jefferson	Sawyer	
Clark	Juneau	Shawano	
Crawford	Lafayette	St. Croix	

Milwaukee has been added as a county in need of an additional non-residential program. Currently, three state funded domestic abuse programs are located in Milwaukee to serve potentially approximately 96,000 battered women. Additionally, one program without any state funding serves battered women, children and men.

Tribes Currently Without Continuous Programs

Bad River	Sokaogan
Ho-Chunk	Stockbridge-Munsee
Lac Courte Orielles	
Potawatomi	
Red Cliff	
St. Croix	

FACTS ABOUT THE EFFECTS ON CHILDREN WHO WITNESS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

DID YOU KNOW?

- The risk of child abuse is significantly higher when partner assault is also reported (Hotaling, Straus and Lincoln, 1989).
- The range of problems among children who witness parental violence includes psychosomatic disorders, such as stuttering, anxiety, fear, sleep disruption and school problems (Hilberman and Munson 1977-78).
- Children in homes where domestic violence occurs are physically abused or seriously neglected at a rate of 1500% higher than the national average in the general population. (A Guide for Health Care Professionals, NJ:March, 1990)
- Young women between the ages of fourteen and seventeen represent an estimated 38% of those victimized by date rape. (Warshaw, 1988)
- Abused children are arrested by the police four times more often than non-abused children. (Gelles and Straus, 1988).
- Sixty three percent of youthful offenders who commit murder do so to kill the abusers of their mothers. (Senate Committee on the Judiciary Reports, 1990)

IN WISCONSIN:

- Children who accompany their mothers represent 57% of domestic abuse service recipients.
- Less than 3% of domestic abuse funding is earmarked for children's services.
- Seventy five percent of all sexual assault victims were juveniles. More than 68% of all victims were fifteen years old or younger. (1995 Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance Report, 1995)
- Children's services housed in domestic abuse programs have a role to play in decreasing the inter-generational transmission of domestic violence.

FACTS ABOUT DOMESTIC ABUSE IN WISCONSIN

DID YOU KNOW?

- Currently, thirty (30) counties and eight (8) tribes have no continuous domestic abuse crisis services. In addition, Milwaukee is a severely under-funded county. Three state funded and one non state funded domestic abuse service providers render assistance to the entire Milwaukee community.
- Potentially, more than 166,000 battered women have no access to continuous services available in their communities.
- The state has not provided an increase in funding from general purpose revenue for domestic abuse services in four years.
- Funding domestic abuse services is an investment with a return. For every dollar provided by the state, communities contribute two dollars in funding for services.
- Domestic abuse programs utilize volunteers to remain cost effective. In 1995, more than 3,400 volunteers contributed more than 245,000 hours of service to victims and their children. At \$6 per hour, they donated \$1,470,000 of in-kind services.

WHY ARE ADEQUATE BASIC SERVICES NECESSARY IN EVERY COUNTY?

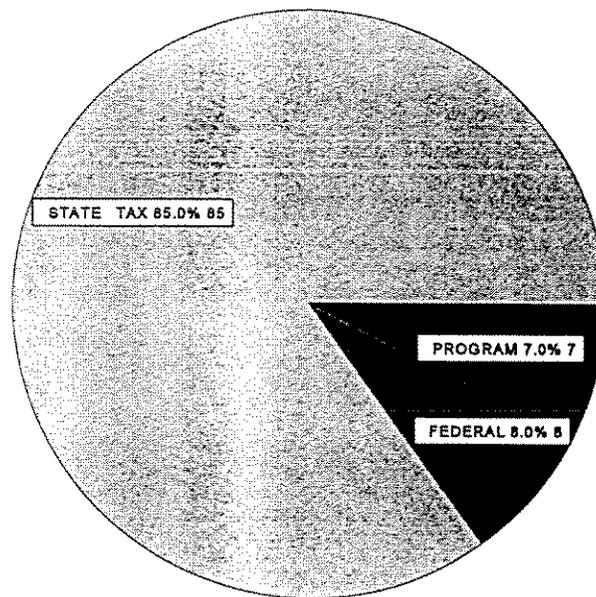
- The risk of assault is greatest when a woman leaves or threatens to leave an abusive relationship, (Browne, 1987).
- In 1995, one out of every five homicides was domestic related.
- The number of reported incidents of domestic abuse related crime has increased steadily since 1990. In 1995 alone, almost 33,000 incidents were reported to law enforcement.
- In 1995, domestic abuse programs turned away 23% of victims requesting shelter because of lack of space. This number could be reduced if basic services were available in every county.
- Crisis calls to domestic abuse service providers have increased 35% in 1995 over 1994.
- Requests for transportation increased 24% in 1995.

THE CURRENT DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM CANNOT ACCOMMODATE THIS KIND OF INCREASE IN NEED.

DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE FUNDING:

In 1995, the state of Wisconsin distributed **\$4,166,000** for services to victims of domestic violence and their children. That amounts to **\$8.90 per victim** if all victims requested services.

Approximately 85% came from the state general purpose revenue. Eight percent (8%) came from the federal Family Violence Prevention and Service Act and the remainder from perpetrator assessments made upon criminal conviction.



DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

Domestic abuse shelters provide food, some clothing, transportation to and from school for children, individual and support group counseling and systems advocacy. The average length of stay per family in a domestic abuse shelter is 14.1 days.

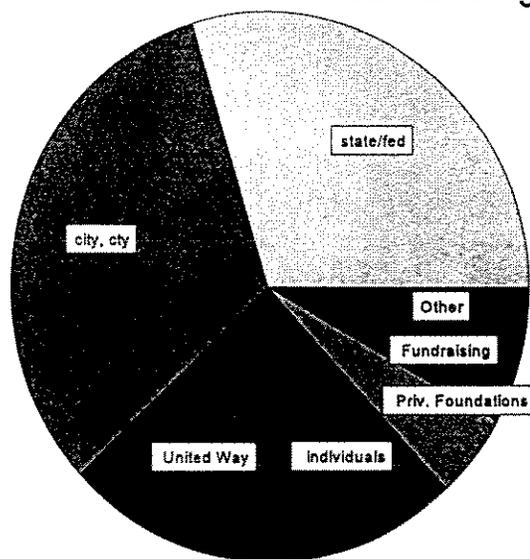
Both non residential and shelter programs provide crisis phone coverage twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week, face to face counseling, legal advocacy and court accompaniment for thousands of victims who choose not to reside in shelter. Many families utilize services more than once a year.

When funding allows, programs provide economic advocacy and long term support and guidance to women and their children who attempt to leave the violent relationship.

Community education and public awareness campaigns function in all programs.

Local Domestic Abuse Funding

State w/fed	30%
City/Cty	32%
Individuals	11%
Private Found.	5%
Fundraising	5%
United Way	4%
Other	3%



In 1995, 3,422 volunteers contributed 245,268 hours of service to victims of domestic violence and their children.



Cambridge High School FHA-HERO

April 15, 1997

Jacob A. Wicke
District 9 Vice President - Wisconsin FHA-HERO
W9685 E. Main Street
Cambridge, WI 53523

Phone (608) 764-5680
E-mail jaw@smallbytes.net

Members of the Joint Finance Committee:

My name is Jacob Wicke, and I am currently serving as District 9 Vice President for the State Vocational Student Organization of Future Homemakers of America. I am here today to speak to you today about my concerns I have as a student regarding the transfer of School to Work operations from the Department of Public Instruction to the Department of Workforce development. I believe that this transfer would limit the integration of career skills into current classes, and limit the involvement of Vocational Student Organizations, such as FHA, in School to Work programs.

I will start off today with a brief example. You all have worked on a team, right? Well, just for right now, imagine that you are all part of a team set out to reach an important goal. But, half of you work for Interest A, and the other half works for Interest B. Who would lead your team, someone from Interest A, or someone from Interest B? Who would fund your team, Interest A, or Interest B? Who would regulate your team? Interest A or Interest B? And would the regulations clash? These are all questions that could arise in such a situation. Now, how does this example relate to the moving of School to Work to the Department of Workforce Development?

At first this change may seem like it is consolidating a service into a similar department. This is not true. The separation of School to Work from The Department of Public Instruction will limit the ability of specialists for every school subject, such as Family and Consumer Education, Mathematics, and Science, to work together with specialists on Career Skills. This will make it harder for teachers in our schools to integrate career skills into their curriculums in order to prepare students to become part of the workforce.

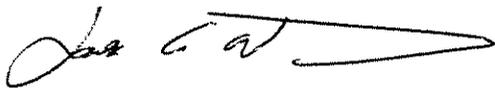
And this integration is greatly needed in our schools. Do you think that math has a greater impact on students if it is taught alone in a single class, or if a family and consumer education teacher integrates math skills into his or her classes by having

students making half-batches of cookies. Do computer skills have a greater impact when taught alone, or integrated into a science class, when a teacher shows students how to chart and compare experiment data in a spreadsheet. Without this integration, career skills could not be taught as effectively in classes.

Vocational Student organizations, such as FHA, are also important keys in career development. Through FHA-HERO I have learned organization, speaking skills, teamwork skills, and leadership skills. These skills are invaluable to me in my current job, and will be important in helping me when I move into my career. FHA also includes a component that is called HERO, or home Economics Related Occupations. Members of HERO learn career skills necessary in pursuing a career in hospitality, and food service. One class currently offered in our school is the HERO co-op. In this class, students learn job skills during school, and receive school release time to go to work. But these vocational student organizations are all run through the Department of Public Instruction. If School to Work was moved to the Department of Workforce Development, the connections between school to work programs and these organizations may be lost.

Today I have told you how the disconnection of School to Work from the Department of Public Instruction would hinder the integration of career skills into school classes, and how this proposal would also make Vocational Student Organizations less involved with preparing students for the workforce. All in all, I disagree with the proposal to move School to Work from the Department of Public Instruction to the Department of Workforce Development, and believe that it is not the right choice to make on the future of the education of myself and other students.

Thank You



Jacob A. Wicke

P.S. Sorry I could not speak. Please be sure to contact me if you would like any more information.

April 15, 1997

Members of the Joint Finance Committee
137 South
State Capitol
Madison, WI. 53702

Re: Testimony in Support of Governor Thompson's Environmental Initiatives

I would like to testify in support of the environmental initiatives in this budget. The proposed Safe Drinking Water Program, the Environmental Performance Agreements, and the Brownfields Land Recycling Program represent a promising approach to solving environmental problems. I believe that the net benefit of adding new environmental regulation to old is currently at the point of diminished returns. At some point, forcing ever more stringent levels of inflexible environmental regulation results in net social costs rather than benefits.

The environmental programs in this budget recognize that incentives must be provided in order to translate environmental goals into desired actions.

For example, the Brownfield Development initiative creates incentives through both financial and technical resources to "recycle" contaminated land. The goal of this program is to achieve closure of contaminated sites so that contaminated land may be returned to productive use.

Most Wisconsin brownfields are not large properties. The stereotypic brownfield is the abandoned gas station with leaking underground tanks. Often the property is in default or tax delinquency. This reality contrasts with the well-published Quad Graphic brownfield success story and the tannery land issue in Milwaukee.

Prior to this Brownfield initiative, the incentive to remediate and recycle these small sites was low. The estimated 8,000 abandoned contaminated properties in Wisconsin is evidence of this fact. Furthermore, the cost of forcing responsible parties to remediate the site was often high, with considerable resources devoted to legal and enforcement action instead of cleanup action.

This budget proposes to create incentives for recycling brownfields through providing:
\$20 million in segregated funds to Dept. of Commerce for grants to municipalities, nonprofit corporations and the private sector for assessment and remediation of contaminated properties.

Expansion of the DOC's permit information center into a one-stop Business Development Assistance Center to coordinate redevelopment assistance efforts and serve as ombudsman for contaminated land redevelopment.

\$4 million to WHEDA's Development Reserve Fund that will act to leverage private bank loans up to \$500,000 for land redevelopment through guarantees. Provide funding to the DNR to support redevelopment assistance, site assessment and GIS system development associated with land redevelopment.

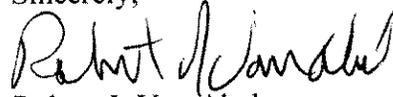
Waive liability laws to protect purchasers from future changes in environmental standards, if the cleanup action fails, and if additional contamination is found on the site which occurred prior to the purchase of the property.

Increase tax credits from 7.5% to 50% for site cleanup and remediation expenses.

These financial incentives coupled with a flexible regulatory response should create sufficient incentive for small and medium size business to undertake contaminated site closure. Benefits of this elective program include first and foremost, achieving closure on the abandoned and contaminated properties in Wisconsin, a more efficient expenditure of public dollars (paying for cleanup instead of legal fees), and potentially providing low cost property for small business expansion and business start-ups in high cost urban areas.

The brownfield issue is a land value issue, as well as environmental one. In Wisconsin, the cost of cleanup is often greater than the price of uncontaminated property. I believe the Governor's brownfield initiative addresses this differential and will benefit both the environment and small businesses of Wisconsin.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Van Abel

P.O. Box 306

Endeavor, WI 53930

Clair Wiederholt

5746 Weis Road
Waunakee, WI 53597
(608) 849-8438
April 16, 1997

Senator Bryan Burke and Representative Scott Jensen
Chairs, Joint Finance Committee and Committee Members
Wisconsin State Legislature
Madison, Wisconsin 53701

RE: Women's Health Initiative

Dear Senator Burke and Representative Jensen and Committee Members:

As a husband to a wonderful woman and father of three daughters, I want Wisconsin women to have the best in health care. However, I believe the Governor's Woman's Health Initiative is misdirected. He wishes to spend my tax dollars to promote the health of the gender that already is healthier and longer lived.

Men already die seven years earlier than women in the U.S. and suffer nearly every major ailment with greater frequency than women. Men suffer more diseases of the heart and die more frequently from every type of cancer with the exception of breast cancer. Additionally men suffer respiratory diseases, pneumonia, influenza, liver disease, diabetes, and pulmonary diseases at higher rates than women.

When we look at mental health, things are similarly to men's disadvantage. Men suffer substantially higher rates of suicide. They are more likely to be admitted to psychiatric hospitals, become alcoholics, be homeless, drop out of high school, and have higher death rates after their spouse dies than women.

However, despite this appalling differential in male-female health and longevity, the federal government already is spending two dollars on research into women's health problems for every one dollar spent on men's health care. In one recent year the National Institute of Health spent 13.5 percent of its total research budget on diseases unique to women, while spending only 6.5 percent of its total budget on diseases unique to men. The remainder was spent on non-gender-specific problems.

For example, in 1993, 46,000 women died of breast cancer and a roughly comparable 35,000 men died of prostate cancer. At the same time the National Cancer Institute spent \$213 million on breast-cancer research and \$51 million on prostate-cancer research. Though there is rough equality in these gender-specific cancers, breast cancer research received four times the funding prostate cancer received.

It makes no sense to invest Wisconsin tax dollars augmenting the health of the group of Wisconsinites that are healthiest already and on who the federal government is already outspending on health care research by a 2-to-1 margin. In my family we focus our resources on caring for the child who is least healthy. For my wife and I to spend extra dollars on doctor visits, preventative care, and vitamins for our healthiest child while ignoring our weakest and sickliest would be neglectful and unethical.

I ask this committee to divide this \$4 million equally between the sexes or to eliminate it entirely from the budget.

I enclose a table for U.S. Bureau of the Census which compares the frequency with which men and women suffer the major health problems.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Clair Wiederholt". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Clair Wiederholt
Men's Studies Instructor, Madison Area Technical College, Madison,
Wisconsin

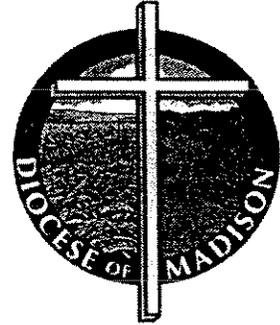
TABLE 2-2. Death Rates Per 100,000 Population by Selected Causes and Sex

YEAR AND CHARACTERISTIC	TOTAL ¹	DISEASES OF HEART	MALIGNANT NEO-PLASMS	ACCIDENTS AND ADVERSE EFFECTS	CEREBRO VAS-CULAR DISEASES	CHRONIC OBSTRUC-TIVE PULMON-ARY DISEASES ²	PNEUMONIA FLU	SUICIDE	CHRONIC LIVER DISEASE, CIRRH-O-	DIABETES MELLITIS
Male: 1960, age-adjusted.....	949.3	375.5	143.0	73.9	85.4	(3)	35.0	16.6	14.5	12.0
1970, age-adjusted.....	931.6	348.5	157.4	80.7	73.2	(3)	28.8	17.3	20.2	13.5
1980, age-adjusted.....	777.2	280.4	165.5	64.0	44.9	26.1	17.4	18.0	17.1	10.2
1982, age-adjusted.....	733.1	264.4	164.8	55.2	39.2	25.5	15.2	18.3	14.9	9.8
1983, age-adjusted ⁴	725.3	260.4	164.3	52.9	37.7	27.0	16.2	18.2	14.3	9.9
15-24 years old.....	140.4	3.2	6.6	74.8	.9	.5	.7	19.4	.1	.3
25-34 years old.....	174.6	11.6	12.8	62.8	2.4	.6	1.8	25.1	4.1	1.6
35-44 years old.....	265.8	60.6	41.1	49.9	7.4	1.6	3.7	21.9	14.3	4.3
45-54 years old.....	694.5	255.1	179.8	49.8	24.4	11.2	8.8	23.9	33.8	10.0
55-64 years old.....	1,725.6	690.6	524.2	54.9	65.9	59.9	23.7	25.8	50.7	26.7
65-74 years old.....	3,885.4	1,607.6	1,088.5	70.4	212.7	210.8	73.6	31.2	55.7	60.8
75-84 years old.....	8,539.1	3,618.0	1,823.3	145.4	720.3	479.6	291.1	49.1	45.9	126.2
85 years old and over.....	17,977.4	8,228.0	2,385.8	349.9	1,820.2	655.7	1,136.3	53.0	27.2	196.8
Female: 1960, age-adjusted.....	590.6	205.7	111.2	26.8	74.7	(3)	21.8	5.0	6.9	15.0
1970, age-adjusted.....	532.5	175.2	108.8	28.2	60.8	(3)	16.7	6.8	9.8	14.4
1980, age-adjusted.....	432.6	140.3	109.2	21.8	37.6	8.9	9.8	5.4	7.9	10.0
1982, age-adjusted.....	411.2	132.5	109.5	18.9	33.2	9.8	8.0	5.4	6.7	9.3
1983, age-adjusted ⁴	411.5	132.3	109.9	18.7	31.8	10.9	8.8	5.2	6.6	9.8
15-24 years old.....	50.7	2.0	4.7	21.7	.8	.5	.6	4.3	.2	.4
25-34 years old.....	68.9	5.0	12.9	15.6	2.0	.6	1.1	6.5	1.9	1.3
35-44 years old.....	140.2	18.6	50.0	14.2	7.2	1.7	1.9	7.6	6.0	3.0
45-54 years old.....	386.0	79.6	165.0	16.4	21.3	8.7	4.7	9.0	15.4	8.6
55-64 years old.....	923.8	262.2	371.6	20.6	50.3	31.7	10.8	8.4	23.5	26.4
65-74 years old.....	2,092.3	777.0	628.7	35.1	158.6	84.8	33.7	7.3	25.1	62.4
75-84 years old.....	5,200.0	2,341.7	918.1	82.7	612.7	131.2	155.3	6.4	23.4	132.3
85 years old and over.....	14,010.6	6,967.8	1,252.8	219.4	1,950.6	166.5	746.0	5.1	14.9	212.0

¹ Includes other causes, not shown separately.² Includes allied conditions.³ Data not available on a comparable basis with later years.⁴ Includes persons under 15 years old, not shown separately.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1987:76.

OFFICE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
142 West Johnson Street • Madison, Wisconsin 53703-2298
(608) 256-0872 • FAX (608) 255-1882



MEMO

To: Members of the Joint Finance Committee
From: Jim Silver, Superintendent of Schools, Catholic Diocese of Madison
Subject: Educational Technology Provisions of the State Budget Bill
Date: April 16, 1997

I am Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Madison and Treasurer of the Wisconsin Association of Nonpublic Schools, an organization representing most of the 148,000 children enrolled in Wisconsin's nonpublic schools. Approximately 15% of all students attending kindergarten through high school in our state attend nonpublic schools.

I would like to share with you some suggestions I have for improving the educational technology initiatives in the proposed state budget.

The budget proposes some changes in the current Universal Service Fund which provides funding for public and nonpublic schools for educational technology. The 1997-1999 budget proposal lacks clarity about the continued inclusion of nonpublic school students in this fund.

The legislation and administrative rules that established the Universal Service Fund and govern its operation clearly include all nonpublic schools. In fact, a number of nonpublic schools in the state have benefitted from grants received through this fund. I am concerned that the language of the budget bill which refers to the use of funds to assure affordable rates for telecommunications for schools does not specifically mention nonpublic or not-for-profit schools. The language of the bill in its references to schools and school districts should be amended to make it clear that nonpublic school students will continue to have access to affordable telecommunications services. Such a change in language will be helpful in providing assurances that nonpublic schools continue to receive equitable access to the Universal Service Fund.

Specifically, I request that the budget bill be amended to ensure there is no misunderstanding that the legislature intends to continue its efforts to see that all children attending school in Wisconsin receive affordable access to telecommunications services. There are three provisions of the budget that could be changed to bring about this assurance.

First, the provision that requires the Public Service Commission to establish an educational telecommunications access program to provide high speed data or video links for not more than \$250 per month, should clearly include nonpublic schools.

Secondly, the proposed program to permit public schools to lease educational technology equipment from the state with an option to purchase should also be amended to include participation by nonpublic schools.

Finally, it would be most helpful to include nonpublic school representation on the Technology for Educational Achievement in Wisconsin Board. Inclusion of a nonpublic school representative on this board would give a voice to that 15% of the school-age population attending nonpublic schools in the state's efforts to implement educational technology initiatives.

We all know how vital and indispensable access to excellent telecommunications services has become as a resource with much potential to help improve the quality of education provided to our children. Those of us who work in nonpublic schools well understand the importance of affordable telecommunications access for our children. I am gratified to see that the governor and legislators continue to show evidence that you support efforts to ensure access to advanced educational telecommunications technologies. Making the few changes and adjustments we are suggesting will help to extend this commitment to all of our state's children.

Thank you for considering this request.

FUND THE COMMUNITY PROMISE!

Governor Thompson's proposed state budget continues the institutional bias and does little to Keep the Community Promise. He proposes a \$132 million increase for nursing homes, but only \$5 million for COP, and he shortchanges the programs listed below.

The \$132 million *increase* is bigger than the entire annual \$119 million *budget* for COP and COP Waiver! This is in spite of the fact that the number of people in nursing homes funded by Title 19 is expected to *decrease*. \$132 million would allow 13,000 more people to be served by COP/COP Waiver! And there are 8900 people on COP waiting lists statewide.

ONCE AGAIN- IT IS UP TO EACH OF US TO EDUCATE LEGISLATORS

THIS IS NOT ABOUT MONEY - IT'S ABOUT HUMAN LIFE AND DIGNITY

IT'S ABOUT YOUR CIVIL RIGHTS

IT'S ABOUT FAIRNESS AND FUNDING THE COMMUNITY PROMISE!

- **Community Options Program** Governor's proposal: 400 slots a year.
Fairness Amendment: Eliminate the 8900 person statewide COP waiting list and restore the transfer of leftover nursing home funds (REINSTATE ACT 469).
- **Community Caps** Governors proposal: repeal the caps
Fairness Amendment: Support the Governors proposal
- **Community Aids** Governor's proposal: \$7.3 million cut to the basic county allocation.
Fairness Amendment: Restore the overall basic county allocation to 1995 levels; restore the GPR portion of Community Aids to 1995 levels; add additional line item for wage initiative with allocation of \$1 million in year 1, and \$2 million in year 2
- **Medical Assistance (Title 19) Co-Payments** Governor's proposal: Increase all co-pays to federal allowable maximums.
Fairness Amendment: No new co-payments or increases.
- **Specialized Transportation** Governor's proposal: \$600,000 increase for elders and people with disabilities, \$12 million to the Brewers to move a highway.
Fairness Amendment: \$2-3 million increase (\$1 million increase for specialized transportation for every penny increase in gas tax)

- **Independent Living Centers** Governor's proposal: No increase.
Fairness Amendment: Increase ILC's base funding by \$75,000/year (total cost for 8 centers= \$600,000 per year)
- **Non-Institutional Medical Assistance Providers (such as Home Health Agencies)** Governor's proposal: 1% increase.
Fairness Amendment: 3% increases.
- **Nursing Home Bed Banking** Governor's proposal: Allow nursing homes to "bank" (temporarily delicense) beds in order to obtain a higher reimbursement under MA.
Fairness Amendment: Remove the Bed Banking provision, leave in place the current incentive for nursing homes to close empty beds and allow counties to convert funding into CIP II funds.
- **SSI and AFDC** Governor's proposal: Eliminate the AFDC payments to 1500 families headed by a parent with a disability on SSI, and replace them with a \$77 per child monthly payment to the parent - this represents a 65% loss of income to an average family.
Fairness amendment: Provide a state supplement equal to amount family received from AFDC or kinship care level of \$215 per child per month.
- **Long-Term Care Redesign and behavioral Health Pilot Programs** Governor's proposal: Zero funding.
Fairness Amendment: Fund the pilots as recommended by the Department of Health and Family Services.
- **Elder Rights Package** Governor's proposal: Zero increases to Benefit Specialist, elder abuse or Ombudsman programs.
Fairness Amendment: Expand all these programs including funds for the Volunteer Ombudsman program.
- **Family Support and Birth to Three** Governor's proposal: Zero increases.
Fairness Amendment: Family Support: \$4 million to eliminate the 1852-family waiting list. Birth to Three: Provide additional \$250,000 in FY98 and \$750,000 in FY 99 for emergency fund to distribute to counties as needed to maintain services.
- **CIP 1B Rate** Governor's proposal: No rate increase.
Fairness Amendment: Increase rates for new slots from \$48.33 to \$75.00; 300 additional slots in FY98 and 200 slots in FY99.

- **Education of Children with Special Needs** Governor's proposal : freeze categorical aids for Handicapped Education which will result in a drop in reimbursement of costs incurred by school districts below 39%.
- **Fairness Amendment:** Increase Categorical Aids so that reimbursements to school districts do not drop below 39%.
- **Right to Refuse Treatment** Governor's proposal: Restrict the rights of competent adults who refuse certain treatment while committed to psychiatric facilities, and authorize the creation of non-treatment facilities.

Fairness amendment: Take this policy issue out of the state budget.

April 16, 1997

Students for a Better Education

Hello, my name is Tara Potter, and I am a student at Madison East High School. I have recently completed my term as State President of HOSA, and I am here today to express how greatly Vocational Student Organizations (VSO), and other School to Work (STW) programs have influenced my life and changed it for the better. My main concern is that by disconnecting the STW programs from the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), and consolidating the STW programs with the Division for Connecting Education and Work within the Department of Workforce Development, it will eliminate many leadership opportunities within our schools by decreasing, and possibly eliminating funding for our programs.

I feel very fortunate that I was given the opportunity to participate in many of the programs offered at my school; such as VSO's (particularly HOSA & HERO), the co-op program, and Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training not only because of everything I learned about myself and my future, but also because of the leadership skills and the confidence that I gained.

A valuable turning point in my life occurred during my junior year of high school when I got involved in HOSA. Through this organization I have learned leadership skills that will last a lifetime. As State President, in summation, I was in charge of running meetings, organizing events, and preparing seminars to increase community awareness, using my creative talents. I think that it is very important to offer variety in schools such as this to expand peoples perspectives on what opportunities are available to them once they graduate from high school. I also have experience competing at both the state and national levels in HOSA. This year I was awarded second place in clinical medical assisting at our state competition, therefore, I will have the opportunity to go on to

national competition in Anaheim, CA this June. Without the funding that we receive from the DPI, this would not be possible for many students, including myself.

Another program that I feel has been extremely beneficial is the co-op program for which I have been a part of since the beginning of my senior year. It not only provides students with well paying jobs that otherwise may have been out of their reach, but the students learn how to keep these jobs, and move up the career ladder. I have learned from my own experiences that hard work and dedication are two crucial elements in life if you plan to succeed, and this program helps you see this more clearly. This program is supervised by our advisor, and we all work together to form a closely united team between advisor, student, and employer. Through this class called HERO, or Home Economic Related Occupations, we have many opportunities to explore our career goals. I was once told that education is preparation. This is true because what good will knowledge do if you don't know how to apply it in your life? From where I stand it can be very confusing when you are unsure of yourself and your future. I also think that it is very important for students to begin contemplating this concept at a young age so that they don't feel pressured to do things they aren't interested in, or to get frustrated, and give up. This is an inexpensive program, and I feel that it must be continued so that our posterity can prosper.

The last program that I would like to mention is the CNA training that I received during my junior year. I feel that this is one of the best STW programs available because the skills you learn will assist you in finding a well paying job, other than minimum wage, and you learn how to work well with people. I feel that communication skills, and people skills are vital to one's success in life, and I strongly feel that if students are not taught these skills at home, they need to have the opportunity to learn them in school. Without this STW program I never would have known if becoming a NA was right for me or not. I think that it is important to have opportunities to try different things in order to learn about yourself, and what you want out of life.

I believe that having success is not only planning and accomplishing one's aspirations, but it is also the confidence and assurance one attains through hard work, creative problem solving, and interacting with others in a positive manner that allows one to grow and move forward as an individual. I have grown as a person because of these valuable experiences, and I hope that the generations after me will have the same opportunities.

If the STW program merges with the Department of Workforce Development the power and financial resources will be transferred from the DPI, and there will be no guarantee to continue supporting programs such as VSO's, co-op's, and CNA training. Think of what a great tragedy this would be.