

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
- 05hrAC-EdR_RCP_pt02

➤ Appointments ... Appt

➤ **

➤ Clearinghouse Rules ... CRule

➤ **

➤ Committee Hearings ... CH

➤ **

➤ Committee Reports ... CR

➤ **

➤ Executive Sessions ... ES

➤ **

➤ Hearing Records ... HR

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➤ Miscellaneous ... Misc

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**Statement To Joint Finance Committee
By Gregory Britton, President and CEO, Beloit Memorial Hospital
Wednesday, April 16, 1997**

Repeal of Hospital Bed Moratorium

My name is Gregory Britton. I am president and CEO of Beloit Memorial Hospital. I thank you for the opportunity to come before this committee today.

I am here as a member of the Council on Public Policy of the Wisconsin Health and Hospital Association. WHA is a trade association representing more than 140 hospitals and health systems located throughout Wisconsin.

I wish to express our strong support for the budget provision to repeal the remaining portions of Chapter 150 relating to the cap on hospitals beds and restrictions on transfer or creation of hospitals beds.

As a member of a WHA task force which looked at this issue back in 1995, I concur with the association's position that these provisions are outdated and are no longer needed to control hospital growth. They only serve to limit the flexibility of hospitals to make our health care delivery system more efficient and more accessible.

Specifically, this budget provision would delete the four remaining hospital bed moratorium provisions in the statutes. (The rest of these requirements were allowed to sunset effective July 1, 1996.)

First, it repeals a requirement that the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) not approve hospitals beds in excess of a statewide cap of 22,516.

- WHA supports repealing this provision because it is unnecessary and irrelevant. As of June 1996, there were only 21,960 approved beds. That is 556 beds below the cap. And the number of beds available under the cap has continued to grow over last few years as a result of hospital closings, the shift from inpatient to outpatient services and other market forces which make this requirement meaningless.

Second, it repeals current law which prohibits transfer of approved beds between hospitals within a system.

- WHA supports repealing this provision because the movement of beds within a system gives flexibility to meet patient needs without adding new beds. Given the fact that systems can make care more accessible, it makes no sense to limit the movement of beds.

Third, it repeals current law which prohibits expansion of the number of the approved beds in a given facility.

- WHA supports repeal of this provision because it makes little sense in light of the fact that the law already allows for construction of new hospitals, but limits expansion of existing ones.

Fourth, it repeals current law prohibiting expansion of psychiatric or AODA hospitals or construction of new ones.

- WHA supports repeal of this provision because market forces, not legislation, has already brought about significant reductions in the number of inpatient psychiatric beds.

These provisions relating to the hospital bed moratorium were created as part of earlier efforts to regulate hospitals costs by limiting construction and capital expenditures. The other facet of that legislation was the Cost Containment Commission. As part of the 1995-96 budget bill, the legislature eliminated the Commission and its related statutes because they recognized that the growth of managed care and other market factors were effectively working to curb unnecessary expansion.

WHA urged this committee and the legislature to repeal the bed moratorium statutes as the last vestiges of an outdated law.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

State Employees Council/WFT/AFT/AFL-CIO

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STATEMENT BY KEN OLSON TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

April 16, 1997

I am Ken Olson, Chair of the State Employee Council of the Wisconsin Federation of Teachers. I have been employed as a forensic scientist with the Department of Justice for 17 years.

The WFT State Employee Council represents the interests of nearly six thousand professional state employees who make it possible for state government to function. We provide essential high-level professional services in literally every agency in state government and on every University of Wisconsin System campus. We are computer programmers, systems analysts and network administrators; forensic scientists; veterinarians, doctors and dentists; auditors; statistical and research analysts; bank examiners; special agents; and many, many more classifications.

We come here today because we have pride in the civil service. We believe in giving something back to the communities in which we live and work. In good times and in times of crisis we have always been there for the people of Wisconsin. We are dedicated to public service and are proud of the solid reputation of Wisconsin's professional state employees.

We have repeatedly proven our efficiency and effectiveness. In fact, Wisconsin ranks 46th out of fifty states in the number of state employees per capita. In recent years we have continued to do more with less resources. Despite less funding, increasing responsibilities and a shrinking state employee work force, we continue to provide the high quality services that Wisconsin citizens deserve and have learned to expect.

Despite our unquestioned accomplishments, however, we have learned that our political leaders are among those least likely to recognize our contribution and accord us respect. At the same time that our jobs have become more difficult and demands for our services have increased, an increasingly hostile political environment has put us constantly on the defensive, forced to fight for respect, decent pay and - in too many cases - our careers.

Some of our political leaders curry public favor by attacking anonymous government "bureaucrats". One top political leader recently referred to our hard-working members at the Department of Public Instruction as "educrats". Too often we are chastised for implementing the very laws and policies that are established in the Legislature and in the Governor's office. We are deeply offended by these attacks on us and on our work.

We are very concerned that recent years have begun a dangerous trend of eroding the state employee workforce, and, therefore, the effectiveness and efficiency of the state government. The negative political environment we work under has had several significant results that will lead to disaster if this trend continues.

- ▶ **A reduction in real wages for state employees.** In recent years, while the Wisconsin economy has grown and personal incomes in the state have grown by 6.2% from 1994 to 1995, state employees have failed to keep pace with even today's modest rate of inflation. In the 1995-97 biennium the administration held the line in our bargaining sessions at 1 and 2 percent for the two years. The Governor's current budget proposal for the next two years again assumes yet another meager wage adjustment for state employees.
- ▶ **Failure to pay market rates for professional positions.** The WFT State Employees Council represents most of the professional employees in state service. In too many

classifications, the pay range assigned is woefully inadequate to compensate our members for the high-level professional work they perform. Although the market rates for these classifications are well-established and mostly non-controversial, the state refuses to make the adjustments necessary to recruit and retain qualified candidates. When a market disparity is admitted by the state, it is expected that any market adjustment come out of our compensation package, making it even less likely that all of our members will be adequately compensated. The compensation reserve as reflected in the Governor's budget is entirely inadequate to deal with market rate issues and cost of living issues.

- ▶ **Contracting Out and Privatization.** This administration has an unabated and irrational bias to contract out the work of the state, work that has always been done well by state employees, to the detriment of not only the state employees but the state taxpayers. This can be seen most clearly in the information technology area. Not only has the Governor chosen not to create adequate numbers of state employee positions to do this important work; the administration has also failed in its statutory duty to keep the information technology classifications up to date and at market rates. As a result, the state is unnecessarily contracting computer work for as much as \$125 an hour that can and should be done by state employees. We have reviewed the agency budgets as proposed by the Governor and found that there is at least \$64 million budgeted for information technology services and hardware, with only about 11 FTE positions provided to do that work. That is a lot of expensive, unnecessary spending on private contractors.

These and other factors have lead to an erosion in the state workforce. We are losing quality employees to the private sector. Those of us still here are swamped by ever-increasing workloads.

Our morale as employees is affected by our deteriorating working conditions and because we are a constant target of those who would use us as a political football and who mistakenly think the quality of the Wisconsin state government will somehow survive this era of neglect and attack

We can no longer accept such indifference from our employer. We can no longer accept such disrespect for our work. We say this not out of arrogance. We are in no position to be arrogant. We say this not out of a lack of respect for the members of the legislature. We say this out of self respect and pride in our work. Accordingly, we ask that this Committee carefully review the proposed budget as it relates to state employee wages, contracting out and adequate staffing levels. We ask that this committee adjust the budget to accord us the respect we have earned and to adequately provide quality services to Wisconsin taxpayers.



WISCONSIN PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES COUNCIL · LOCAL 4848
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Fair pay and a fair say: Stand up for what professionals deserve!

Testimony of Mike Plaisted
WFT Staff Representative for
the Wisconsin Professional Employees Council (WPEC)
Local 4848, WFT/AFT/AFL-CIO

Joint Finance Committee — April 16, 1997

Subject: The Wisconsin Lottery

My name is Mike Plaisted. I am a Staff Representative for the Wisconsin Federation of Teachers. For the past five years, I have worked almost exclusively for WFT's largest local, the Wisconsin Professional Employees Council (WPEC). WPEC represents over 3900 professional state employees in every state agency and University system campus.

Among our members are a small but dedicated group of marketing professionals who, from 1988 until last year, represented the Wisconsin Lottery to its retail outlets throughout the state. Our members had regular routes of stores large and small at which they would make sure the needs of the retailers were met, introduced new games, performed important security functions regarding the tickets and delivered the tickets to the outlets.

Our members have watched in horror as Lottery administrators closed offices, conducted layoffs and shuffled them off to other positions in the Department of Revenue. The last two office were closed last year in anticipation of total privatization of the Lottery. Now, with the failure of the attempt to privatize because - predictably - the bid from the single bidder could not be justified, no one has been doing this important work for almost an entire year.

The results of the Lottery's mistake of jettisoning our members have been predictable and disastrous for the success of the Lottery. The number of retailers have dropped from 5000 to 4200. The Department of Revenue now estimates that Lottery proceeds will fall as much as 20% this year. The recent Legislative Audit Bureau report agrees that the dramatic fall-off in Lottery sales is directly related to the elimination of the state employee sales marketing force.

The Audit Bureau report has led some in the legislature to attempt to kill the Lottery altogether. We are taking no position on that effort. However, if Wisconsin is to have a Lottery, it is our position that the Lottery must be operated by the state and that work must be done by state employees.

Our position is that the Lottery can become more successful within the structure of the Governor's budget proposal currently before you. The budget, which eliminates 31.5 positions but retains 92.5 positions for all lottery operations, actually leaves room for staffing a reconstructed state employee retailer support function. According to a report by the Legislative Fiscal Bureau, 32 of the positions are allocated for "marketing and retailer relations". At least half of those positions could and should be used to resurrect the retailer support function. Our members should be allowed to return to those positions if they want to and their responsibilities should be enhanced to make full use of their skills as marketing experts.

It also appears that another change in the Lottery is necessary. Through the years since the creation of the Lottery Board, the Lottery has moved to the Gaming Commission and finally, last year, to the Department of Revenue as a separate division. During all of that time, the same core of administrators have stayed with the Lottery and are still there today. These are the same administrators who have presided over a Lottery on a downward spiral when the national trend

for Lottery sales is up. These are the same administrators that allowed the sales marketing force to be decimated and eliminated irresponsibly, before a structure was in place to perform this vital function. This is the same group who have allowed the Lottery to limp along with a skeleton staff for the past year. These are the administrators who have failed Wisconsin taxpayers by mismanaging the Wisconsin Lottery. The Lottery needs new blood and a complete change in its leadership to be successful.

The Governor's budget provides the resources for the Lottery to be successful. However, the status quo must change. Our members stand ready to return to the Lottery and to work, as they always have, toward a successful future and increased property tax relief.

Honorable Representative Scott Jenson - Co-Chair of Joint
Finance Committee
State Capitol Building

Hearing on the Governor's Budget for 1997-99

April 16, 1997

RE: Community Aids and Long-Term Care

THOUGHTS TO PONDER:

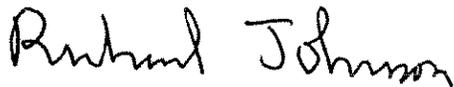
- Is compassion and humanity a thing of the past? Where is the logic in increasing funding for Nursing Homes while freezing and cutting programs that allow people with long term needs to live in the community?
- People with disabilities living in the community create jobs and the money they spend on life's activities goes directly to the community.
- Of course Nursing Homes offer a service to some, but when Wisconsin has the highest number of nursing home beds per capita, why give more dollars to warehouse people in unnatural settings?
- If people with disabilities were their primary concern, wouldn't Nursing Home Companies advocate that people live in the community where they are a part of the community?
- Times have changed since we grew up even just twenty-five years ago. We are no longer hiding and warehousing people who are "different" so they are out of sight and out of mind. We may have different responses, but we all know that all people are people, and they have the right to live in the community of their choice. Our awareness and consciousness has changed, and now our attitude needs to change to reflect our new understanding that- whatever someone's circumstance, he or she has the right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."
- **REMEMBER, all of us are one drunk driver away from the following scenario: In the middle of your long spinal cord injury rehabilitation your insurance runs out; your HMO informs you that you have used up your hospital days; you then use up your savings, and then you discover that there are hundreds of people on waiting lists ahead of you for Community Aids Programs- *SO WHAT DO YOU DO?* Your choice is to move into a shared room in a Nursing home, where your daily routine is decided by staff and professionals other than yourself? (Idea: GO EXPLORE a Nursing Home!)**
- The Community Integration Program (CIP), and the Community Option Programs (COP), are already in place and provide people a means to live in the community in a fiscally sound manner.

- COMMUNITY PROGRAMS ARE ABOUT PEOPLE!

If my words jar you, so much the better, for only when you have a personal sense, or connection to these issues do you begin to see life's reality for people with disabilities. Do you honestly think that the lobbyists in dress suits understand the situation of people with disabilities trying to survive while on waiting lists? Do you think any of them ever had to make a decision to alternate months on whether to buy food or one's prescriptions because they can't move off the waiting list into the CIP or COP programs?

If you would like to discuss any of these ideas or thoughts further, please contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard Johnson".

Richard Johnson
922 East Mifflin Street
Madison, WI 53703

PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE 4/16/97 - MADISON WISCONSIN

Good morning Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee. I am Michael Jackson. I am a member of the Wisconsin Southeast Association of County Veteran Service Officers (otherwise known as the South East Association). The member counties of this group include: Dane, Dodge, Jefferson, Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Rock, Walworth, Washington, and Waukesha. I serve as Dane County Veteran Service Officer.

I am here, before you as representative of the Southeast Association, to offer brief testimony on the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs 1997-99 biennium budget request. Although my message is brief, our resolve as veterans advocates is steadfast. In the main, the Southeast Association supports the Departments budget, we think that overall it is a good one, however with one exception -- the 50% reduction of the part-time study grant (PTSG). We do not support this aspect of their budget. In my opinion, the PTSG as it exists now is not a threat to a solvent Veterans Trust Fund.

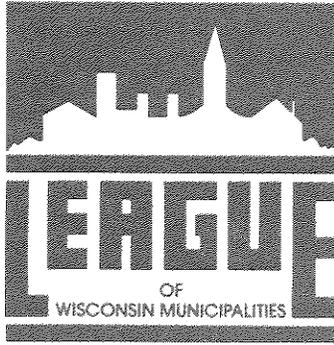
At a time when educational expenses are certainly not decreasing it would not be helpful to veterans, nor their families, to reduce their benefits. You have

Page 2

probably heard CVSOs serve on the front line and we serve as the Departments' delivery system for their programs. Should this proposed reduction be approved, we would also be in the unenviable position to answer the veterans questions and those of their elected representatives as to why this benefit was reduced, and how did you Mr. or Ms. CVSO, also known as Veterans Advocate, let it happen. It is my hope these are questions none of us will have to address.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you on this issue, and I am prepared to answer questions should you have any.


MICHAEL R JACKSON



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To: Members of the Joint Finance Committee
From: Dan Thompson, Executive Director *Dan*
Date: April 16, 1997
Re: 1997-99 Biennial Budget Bill

On behalf of the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, I'd like to comment on three programs in the 1997-99 state budget bill. They are: shared revenue, transportation and brownfields.

Shared Revenue. The budget bill holds the shared revenue program, including the expenditure restraint and small communities improvement programs, at 1996 funding levels. This does not represent cost to continue for state support of municipal services. Without adequate funding of the shared revenue program, local officials will be forced to cut essential services or raise property taxes. We are concerned about losing the historic partnership between state and local government to provide basic municipal services.

Transportation. The program where the Committee has the most discretion to increase spending to local governments is the transportation fund. The League of Wisconsin Municipalities has joined with the Wisconsin Alliance of Cities, the Wisconsin Towns Association, the Wisconsin Urban Transit Association, Dane County and the New Transportation Alliance to propose a long term plan to increase state support for maintaining and repairing local roads.

The proposal would:

- Continue to spend nearly all of the federal revenue on state and interstate highways;
- Increase, by 2% each year, the local share of user fees from the current 42% until it reaches 65%; and
- Distribute the aid in the same proportion among the categories.

Even while general transportation aids are increasing, the costs of maintaining local roads are increasing at a faster rate. Municipal tax rates are rising, in part, to make up this difference.

Brownfields. The provision allowing municipalities to create a brownfield district, using techniques similar to tax incremental financing, will be very helpful to municipalities struggling to clean up contaminated sites.

The Governor has also provided a grant program for the redevelopment of brownfields and associated environmental remediation activities. The League's policy committees have gone on record supporting the program with the following changes:

- The funding come from general purpose funds, not the recycling fund.
- The amount of money be increased to address the scope of contaminated sites that exist in the state.
- The grants for cleanup should be based on environmental criteria, not on the size of the community.

Conclusion. Local officials depend on state legislators to provide cost to continue funding in support of existing services. This budget doesn't do that. There is room for additional support for local government, however, in the transportation budget. We hope legislators will assist local officials in improving local roads without raising local taxes. Thank you for your consideration.

BUDGET HEARING TESTIMONY

4-16-97

My name is Chantel Buckeridge. I work with the Visiting Nurse Service as a Home Health Aide. I've been doing CNA work for six years. I'm here today to give you a feeling for what I do as a home health aide and the difference I make in my patients lives.

One of my patients is a 42 year old man who is paraplegic. He is able work but he can not dress himself, give himself a bath or check for pressure sores. When I visit him I do catheter care, bathe him and prepare him with a snack and a drink. I fix his bed and put a chux (a protective pad) under him. Because this patient has home health care he is able to work and to remain independent and in his own home. He tells me that if he wasn't able to have me come to his home, he doesn't know how he'd survive.

I have another patient who is bed bound because of spinal cord disease. He has heart problems and diabetes. He has a history of very bad bed sores. Since Visiting Nurse Service has begun providing care , his skin has been basically intact except fro a few superficial bed sores. His only other care giver is his wife who has severe back and hip problems. Each visit I bathe him, provide skin care to prevent wounds, I do range of motion exercises with him to keep his arms and legs from spasming. I also do light chore services to help his wife since their laundry is in the basement. This man is alert and oriented. He is a kind and caring man who is able to stay in his home because of Visiting Nurse Service. If he did not have a home health aide he would not be able to remain in his own home.

So many of my patients tell me that if they didn't have people like us, they would be forced into a nursing home or into some other type of institution.

WISCONSIN LEAF TOBACCO DEALERS AND GROWERS ASSOCIATION

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the Wisconsin Leaf Tobacco Dealers and Growers Association represents approximately 1500 tobacco farmers in the state of Wisconsin who earn their living and pay their bills with money earned from tobacco;

WHEREAS three Wisconsin farmers quit farming every day and very few agricultural products provide the return on investment, like tobacco;

WHEREAS census data shows nearly 40 percent of the state's farmers are 55 and older and the younger generation is not staying in family farming business because it is too difficult to try to make a living at it;

WHEREAS the decline of family farms in Wisconsin is affecting the economies of rural communities where farmers have been excellent customers for local schools, banks, stores and churches;

WHEREAS the 1994 economic impact of tobacco growers on Wisconsin's economy in terms of state and local taxes paid by core supplier sector firms and employees was \$219 million.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The Wisconsin Leaf Tobacco Dealers and Growers Association urge members of the Wisconsin Joint Finance Committee and Wisconsin Legislature to oppose new excise taxes on tobacco. This resolution adopted April 11, 1997.

Donna Nicolai
Signed Onaska Wis

4-11-97

Date

Arlin Manske
Signed Chaseburg, Wis

4-11-97

Date

Leslie Levine
Signed Ferryville Wis

4/11-97

Date

Robert Lee
Signed Coon Valley Wis

4/11/97

Date

Henrich Savall
Signed Cushton Wis

4-11-97

Date

Alvin E. Christian
Signed Winona Wis.

4-11-97

Date

P. Gene Anderson
Signed Viroqua, Wis.

4-11-97

Date

Clayton Berg
Signed Winona Wis.

4-11-97

Date

Oliver Johnson
Signed Deerfield

4/11/97

Date

David Olson
Signed Stoughton

4/11/97

Date

Delynn A. Remolue
Signed Staughton, WI

4.11.97
Date

Martin Oberdeck
Signed 7134 W. State 59

Date

Robert Edgerton
Robert Gardner
Signed W4179 5TH 60
R10, WI, 53960

Date

Lyle Mae
Signed Staughton

Date

Verne J. Jensen
Signed 6887 W. STRD

Date

Wayne Farming Co
Signed 8239 County R
Edgerton, WI

Date

Gander Youthland
Signed 832 4x 138
Staughton

Date

Robert L. Deum
Signed 436 E Church Rd
Cambridge, WI 53523

Date

Signed

Date

Alice S. Searle
Signed 5757 1/2 CIA
#159

Date

Robert F Barty
Signed

Edgerton, WI

4-11-97
Date

George Nettum
Signed

Verona, W. 54665

4-11-97
Date

Wally Clatun Edgerton WI
Signed

Date

Signed

Date

DATE: April 15, 1997
TO: George E. Meyer
FROM: Peter Muñoz - ODA

FILE REF:

SUBJECT: State Council on Affirmative Action

The Wisconsin Evaluation Survey Report recommends the elimination of the Council on Affirmative Action. The justification for this recommendation is based on the premise that the Council's activities are "duplicative and redundant". However, the elimination of the Council will have a significant adverse impact on the future AA/EEO programs in the Agency.

Counter to the report's conclusion, the work of the Council is neither duplicative nor redundant. Rather, it performs the crucial function of providing citizen involvement in the process of setting the State's AA/EEO/Diversity mission, and strategy for implementation of its related programs. The report cites the presence of AA Officers and advisory committees internal to agencies as performing duplicate function as the Council. However, this argument is erroneous because it ignores the fact that AA officers and advisory committees are employees of the State and, as such, concentrate in matters internal to Agencies. As our agency moves toward ecosystem based management, the importance of the role of the Council in providing an avenue for citizen input becomes self-evident.

The Affirmative Action Council has played a key role in maintaining Wisconsin's progressive leadership among state governments in the area of Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity. Wisconsin's Fair Employment Law was one of the first, and remains one of the best state laws in the country in safe guarding AA/EEO. It is through these laws that our Agency is able to implement its exemplary AA/EEO programs. Given current national movement against affirmative action, DNR needs the Council firmly in place in order to ward off any attempts in Wisconsin to destroy its programs. Indeed, the effort to eliminate the Council itself may be considered a key part of carrying out this movement in our State.

DNR has identified AA/EEO/Diversity as an important Secretary issue. Therefore, DNR should strongly recommend to the Legislature that the Council be kept firmly in place as a key component in attaining it's goals.

Peter Muñoz
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Thank you for giving us the opportunity to voice our concerns about the pending budget. My name is Sam Edwards. I'm Regional Director Vice President of Sales for S. Abraham & Sons, a Milwaukee-based distributor of tobacco products, grocery products, and health and beauty products, among other things. Our company employs 200 people in Wisconsin.

We are against any increase in the excise tax on cigarettes for several reasons:

- 1) Retailers are hurt because raising the excise tax, by any amount, encourages cross-border traffic. When consumers cross the border to purchase cigarettes, they buy other products as well. The state of Wisconsin should not be encouraging Wisconsin consumers to go to other states to purchase these products. When it happens, not only do retailers get squeezed, but our business is hurt also. The American Economics Group estimates revenue loss to retailers because of even a \$.25 increase could result in 3,200 lost jobs.
- 2) More than any other group, retailers and distributors like ourselves are concerned about the problem of youth access to cigarettes. But the biggest myth about raising the excise tax on cigarettes is that it will reduce youth smoking. Studies by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control show that raising the tax has little effect on youth smoking. In fact, in some cases, youth smoking rises when tax is increased. That actually happened in Illinois, Nebraska, and Hawaii. Raising the price of cigarettes only increases the "forbidden nature" of cigarettes, which as we all know because we were young at one time, is appealing to youth.
- 3) There's no doubt the state will benefit initially from a tax increase. But the cigarette tax is not a reliable source of revenue. Adult smokers simply will find alternative low-tax or no-tax sources for cigarettes. When that happens, the state will be back for another increase. Adult smokers already pay \$200 million annually in cigarette taxes. It's time to examine other ways to fix the state's problems.

Thank you.





Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault

**Joint Committee on Finance
Written Testimony Regarding "Truth In Sentencing" Initiative
1997-99 Biennial Budget**

Submitted in Writing on April 16, 1997
By Amy E. Judy, Policy Development Specialist

Since I am unavailable to testify in person today, I wished to communicate to Members of the Joint Committee on Finance our support for the "Truth In Sentencing" provisions within the 1997-99 Biennial Budget. The Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA) is a statewide coalition of rape crisis centers and other organization and individuals working to end sexual violence throughout Wisconsin. An issue of great importance to the victims of sexual violence served by the 32 community-based rape crisis centers in Wisconsin is offender accountability.

The "truth in sentencing" provisions within the biennial budget bill restructures sentencing practices so that every day an offender is sentenced to imprisonment is a day served in prison. As advocates for victims/survivors of sexual assault, the rape crisis centers often encounter frustration and disillusionment among victims following conviction of the offender because what is communicated to victims at sentencing does not reflect truly the time an offender actually will serve in prison. "Truth in sentencing" is more honest and clean in its approach to sentencing.

While this initiative may raise questions about its practical effects on sentencing as a whole, victims/survivors of sexual assault and other crimes will recognize and applaud the common sense approach used under this initiative. "Truth In Sentencing" will project a reality of justice that sometimes gets lost for victims at sentencing. Often at the end of a trial, a victim of a sexual assault crime hears at sentencing that the offender is sentenced to twenty years, for example. The victim becomes disillusioned with the criminal justice process and the idea of "justice" when the sentence served is significantly less in many cases than the imposed sentence.

WCASA supports the general approach embraced through restructuring sentencing practices to reflect a cleaner process: every day the offender is sentenced is every day served. We urge your consideration of and support for the "Truth In Sentencing" provisions.



**THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WISCONSIN, INC.**

122 State Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53703-2500 608-256-0827 FAX 608-256-2853

**STATEMENT TO JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE RELATING TO
BROWNFIELDS
Madison, Wisconsin
April 16, 1997**

We are pleased that the Governor's proposal on brownfields draws on the experience gathered by the Department of Natural Resources, Department of Administration and Department of Commerce involved in the past year with a dozen pilot brownfield projects. The pilots have allowed these state agencies to explore the legal liability, DNR oversight vs. self-implementing nature of clean-up rules and other policy and funding issues related to contaminated land remediation.

It is crucial that we invest within urban areas, instead of overlooking existing infrastructure investments in order to develop greenfields where that same infrastructure will have to be duplicated. Land recycling is excellent land use and helps to create a level playing field for brownfields and greenfields. This initiative will help to overcome the disincentives for urban development created by proliferation of state supported incentives for suburban and rural development of infrastructure.

There are several aspects of this initiative that need to be addressed.

Community Involvement

Local community input into the land redevelopment is essential to ensure that a particular business or industry will have a positive effect on the community. We should not be encouraging developments that may have a long term negative effect on the local economy and/or health. Developments that take crucial dollars away from local business or further pollute the air, water or soil should not be allowed.

Protection of Public Health and Safety

Protection of public health and the environment must remain the top priority throughout the implementation of the Land Redevelopment Initiative. It is important that the DNR retain the ability to fully enforce NR 700 rules. The League of Women Voters participated in developing NR 700 as the minimum standards and rules necessary for the protection of human population and the environment. The DNR should not now be forced to negotiate or otherwise be restricted in any manner in enforcing NR 700 rules.

Provisions need to be made to pro-actively assess contaminated sites to determine the full extent

- more -

of the contamination. Currently the public is unknowingly at risk from sites that have never been assessed for the level and type of contamination they contain. The public has a right to know what contaminants are on a site and what the potential impacts may be.

Funding Sources

The brownfield initiative should stand on its own financially for it to remain viable for the long term. Diminishing programs such as the Recycling Fund and the Stewardship Fund is renegeing on previous long-term commitments made by the state to businesses, municipalities and citizens. The goals of the Land Recycling Initiative are not similar to those of the Recycling Fund or the Stewardship Fund goals. The citizens of Wisconsin produced the Recycling Fund and the Stewardship Fund and trust the long-term commitments that were made to continue them. Raiding these funds is deceiving the public and is bad public policy.

We must also go slowly and invest wisely in projects that would not have otherwise happened; choosing those sites first which will have immediate and beneficial health impact. This land development initiative will succeed if we provide business and industry development that fits the site, its level of contamination and the needs of the surrounding community without sacrificing the financial viability of other critical programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support and concerns on the Land Redevelopment Initiative.

AGEADVANTAGE



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Testimony

Lucille M. Baker, Executive Director
Prepared for the Joint Committee on Finance
Public Hearing
Madison, WI
April 16, 1997

Thank you for the opportunity to come before this committee to express my concern over the ways the 1997/99 budget bill will affect the growing disparity between the funding for institutional care and community based care in the critical time before the state redesigns its long term care system. My name is Lucy Baker. For fifteen years, I have served as the Administrator and more recently as the Executive Director for AgeAdvantAge, Inc. The agency is the not-for-profit organization designated as the Area Agency on Aging for the twelve counties of southern Wisconsin. As such, we work daily with the Aging Unit Directors who run county aging services in our district. We help them develop and evaluate the programs that mobilize volunteers and resources that make rural aging programs the models of community involvement and success they are.

Many frail older people and their caregivers are making a go of staying part of their communities and families by living independently with a bit of help from various sources. We pay a lot of attention in Wisconsin (and rightly!) to the Community Options Program and its associated MA Waivers in keeping our institutional costs down through a judicious use of Medical Assistance dollars, state funds, county funds and the elbow grease of caregivers, friends and volunteers.

We have had a nationally envied tradition of public policy specifically aimed at this Wisconsin blend of community based care and institutional care. And for good reason: it works for people and our budget. During the past year untold hours of good thought and hard work by state staff and administrators, with the guidance of committees of older and disabled people, members of the long term care industry, counties, aging and disability agencies and their associations have been preparing to redesign this system. The redesign will make the \$2 billion that Wisconsin spends each year go further, tap into the natural support systems that currently provide 80% of all long term care, and assure that

AGE ADVANTAGE

money will follow people. No longer will frail people be forced into expensive institutions to get care. In the new system, that money would be available to purchase care often at a lesser cost in their communities. This is a big change in public policy and a smart move in keeping long term care costs down while serving more people better.

We feel that the 1997/99 Budget is out of step with the public policy preparations and goals of the Long Term Care Redesign. Perhaps legislators who have also been involved in the planning of the Redesign share our surprise at the sheer size of the \$132 million increase to a nursing home industry that is serving fewer people every year. One has only to look at effect that the \$5 million increase for the Community Options Program to see the disparity. For its \$5 million, the community care side will cover its increased costs to continue AND serve 400 more people.

I hope that you will agree with me that the state budget cannot be so out of step with the coming innovations that the state itself is working so hard to realize. While the Boren amendment may mandate some increases for nursing homes you might reconsider the way that the mandated amounts are calculated. Just imagine how odd our long term care reality has become when as inflationary increase to institutions is so huge that it dwarfs the entire community based care annual budget of \$119 million. How odd has our long term care reality become when the funding for pilot projects meant to start testing the Long Term Care redesign concepts were removed in order to save money? This budget further opens the door to an expensive institutional bias that we all know we can't afford. I urge you to do the following:

- ✓ **Eliminate the 8,900 COP waiting list and restore the transfer of nursing home funds to COP (Act 469).** Remember that providing more funds to nursing homes does NOTHING to increase the number of people they serve (which is decreasing) and that the growth in Wisconsin's long term care population is on the community based side.
 - ✓ **Restore the funding for pilot projects to test the redesign of the Long Term Care System.**
 - ✓ **Fund the Elder Rights Proposal** that expands funding for the Statewide Benefit Specialist program, expands the Nursing Home Ombudsman Program including the Volunteer Ombudsman Program, and increase the services available to victims of elder abuse.
 - ✓ **Fund these and other Community Care increases using a nickel increase in the cigarette tax, reinstatement of Act 469, and elimination of the Senior Citizens Income Tax Credit.**
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 ASW... ASW... ASW... ASW... ASW... ASW...

PUBLIC HEARING -April 16,1997

Senator Brian Burke, Representative Scott Jensen and Members
of the Joint Committee on Finance:

Members of the Autism Society of Wisconsin have struggled over the years to keep their children with autism at home and out of the state institutions. Those who have succeeded have saved the state and federal MA budgets over a million dollars per family. Some of these families have had help through the family support and respite programs but most have not had access to these resources.

All of these families have had the resource of public education for their children and for this we are grateful. Recent federal and state changes in definitions and training are offering better educations to our children. This fact and the use of improved therapeutic interventions have meant that young people with autism are having unprecedented academic success. It is imperative that categorical aids for special education continue to reimburse local school districts at current levels.

Our adults with autism want to continue to live in the community. We must recognize that for most of them, this is the cost effective as well as the preferred alternative. Wisconsin must begin to fund community services at a level that will provide quality vocational and residential services and prevent staff turnover (currently from 35% to almost 100% in some agencies).

We urge you to recognize that the \$132,000,000 increase for nursing homes in the next biennium is larger than the entire annual \$119 million budget for COP and the COP Waiver. In addition, the proposed budget cuts Community Aids by \$7.3 million and reduces the state's GPR commitment by \$31.8 million dollars (substituting federal funding at risk of future cuts).

It is not easy to parent a child (and later an adult) with autism. The families who succeed usually have two parents who can work together and often an extended family to offer support. We must recognize the difficulties of parents on W-2 and their increased need for child care while the child is young and after age 12, if the parent is to be able to work. In addition, there are also families with disabled parents. The current plan to offer only \$77 per child per month to parents on SSI who must comply with W-2 is an invitation to starvation. We must not be that inhumane and we must recognize that this short sightedness will lead to increased use of more expensive foster care.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Frances Bicknell
Legislative Chair.

Erma Winter
Juneau WI
Dodge County

Joint Finance Committee
April 15, 1997

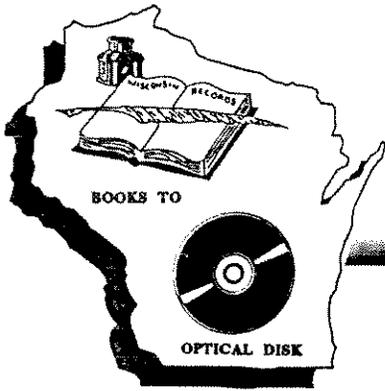
Dear Members

I am the mother of a young man with mental retardation. He lives home with my husband and myself. He is 47 yrs old. He needs Community option (COP) services, to continue to live at home. We are aging parents with an aging child living in our home. Besides my son there are 120 people with retardation in Dodge County on a waiting list waiting for services. The Community option (COP) program saves money for the County and State when our family member can remain living at home. More funding monies should be allocated to this program for it also helps to keep many elderly out of the nursing homes. There by saving money. Please support the Community option (COP) program. to keep people in the community.

Thank you

Erma Winter

153 E. Oak Grove Juneau WI 53039



WISCONSIN REGISTER OF DEEDS

Association

April 16, 1997

To: Members of Joint Finance Committee, Wisconsin State Legislature

From: Jane Licht, Wisconsin Register of Deeds Association President
(608)267-8814 FAX: (608)267-3110

Re: Provision to delete the Wisconsin Land Information Board

One of your colleagues shared Department of Administration Secretary Mark Bugher's letter to legislators with me. Mr. Bugher was presenting rationale for elimination of the existing Wisconsin Land Information Board, explaining that the proposed Wisconsin Land Council could easily take over the duties of the WLIB.

Our association disagrees with Mr. Bugher's position on this matter. The proposal is clearly a way for the Department of Administration to take over a very popular and successful locally-based program. We believe that a council of mainly state agency heads whose primary charge is to recommend ways of solving land use issues does not make a grass roots program for improving land information systems at the local level.

Over the last five years that the Wisconsin Land Information Board has awarded grants to counties and municipalities, learning curves and land information modernization have made dramatic progress in all areas of the state. I know from the experience of working in the trenches, being the one to actually implement a new indexing and imaging system, and being involved in the planning of our geographic information system, there is no way for state government bureaucrats to wave a magic wand and make it happen all across Wisconsin. There is no substitute for hard work and determination at the local level--the place where most land information is gathered, stored, and available for public access.

The Wisconsin Land Information Program--which is the WLIP plus the technical staff of three people, provides guidance, expertise, and distributes grant money to make land records modernization happen in counties and municipalities who are ready to tackle the challenge. The WLIP already has made great strides in developing a land information clearing house; having a Land Council take over would only slow down progress. The WLIP already effectively encourages communication and cooperation among governmental units involved with land information.

"FEW THINGS MUST LAST AS LONG AS COUNTY RECORDS"

From a land information point of view, land use planning is only one of many attributes of a multi-purpose land information system. Trying to have the tail wag the dog has never been a good idea, especially when the tail belongs to a different animal. The process of modernizing land information supports many government and private sector interests. But it is neutral when it comes to land use policy issues. Getting tangled in thorny, controversial land use policy issues can only be detrimental to land information system modernization--a discipline which is embraced by folks who may otherwise be antagonists, such as land developers and land use planners, Realtors and environmentalists.

The WLIP is not funded by state income tax dollars. It is totally funded by user fees. A surcharge was placed on the first page of every document recorded in the office of the register of deeds. The title insurance company officers, attorneys, Wisconsin Realtors, surveyors, utility representatives and others who have to take the heat for the increased fees did not complain about it because they understood the potential benefits of improved public access to better land information.

I suspect that there are officials within the DOA who covet the independence of the WLIP and the program revenue. I suspect that there are officials within the DOA of the old mindset that local governments can't do it and so big brother state government should step in and do it. But these state agency folks should remember that the state did not do so well with the KIDS state-wide computer program (it's still not working properly), and the first state UCC computer program was a total disaster. I also suspect that because there is no longer enough grant money to satisfy all the counties and municipalities ready to implement modern land information systems and thus, complaints are being voiced, that the DOA views the program as being vulnerable.

If the DOA is committed to the Land Use Council, then I think it is appropriate for Mr. Bugher to promote it. But not at the expense of the Wisconsin Land Information Program. This is the position our Wisconsin Register of Deeds Association took at the Spring Seminar in March of this year. Thanks for your time and consideration of this matter.

**Wisconsin
Retirement
Consortium**

Joint Finance Committee Testimony

1997-99 Biennial Budget (SB77/AB100):
State of Wisconsin Investment Board (SWIB)

by

Ken Opín, President, Wisconsin Retirement Consortium
Wednesday, April 16, 1977

Introduction

My name is Ken Opín. I am the President of the Wisconsin Retirement Consortium. We have seventeen organizations as members, representing management and labor, participants and annuitants. Collectively we represent virtually all of the participants and a significant percentage of the annuitants in the Wisconsin Retirement System.

SWIB

The Wisconsin Retirement Consortium supports the State of Wisconsin Investment Board's request for an increase in the budget to \$5.4 million, all from program revenue, to upgrade their information systems, up from the Governor's recommendation of \$3.5 million. SWIB has already shared with you their most recent cost information, and we urge you to pay close attention to it.

Please remember that all the funds to run SWIB are program revenue. To us, SWIB's program revenue is our members' pension money. We want it spent wisely. Excess spending means either increased contributions from participants and employers or lower pensions to annuitants. We watch this money closely.

We are convinced that SWIB's information system proposal is well thought out, a good use of our members' pension money, and a sound investment that we all hope will lead to lower costs, better information and higher pensions in the future.

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Thomas L. Frazier, *Executive Director*

Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups

Testimony Before the Joint Committee on Finance

April 16, 1997

by

Thomas L. Frazier

My name is Tom Frazier, Executive Director of the Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups, (CWAG) a grassroots coalition of over 630 member organizations in Wisconsin. I would like to talk with you about our priorities for the 1997/99 budget.

Our top priority is long-term care, especially additional funding for the Community Options Program (COP). Older persons and people with disabilities want to be able to remain in their own homes! The Governor's proposed budget would do very little to address the needs and desires of older persons and people with disabilities who want to stay at home as an alternative to an institution. There continues to be an entitlement for institutional care and waiting lists for COP. For example: Ashland County has a COP waiting list of 119 people; Brown (463); Dane (1,449); Douglas (138); Kenosha (143); Marathon (113); Milwaukee (2,647); Ozaukee (39); Portage (4); St. Croix (32); Sauk (72); Shawano (36); Washington (4); Waukesha (881); Winnebago (68) and Wood County (49). This totals 6,257 older persons and people with disabilities who are your constituents who are on waiting lists, struggling day after day to keep their independence and dignity. Your constituents represent over 75% of the waiting list for COP.

Another nickel a pack tax increase on cigarettes would go a long, long way toward eliminating waiting lists. A nickel raises approximately \$20 million a year that would leverage an additional \$21 million in federal funds under the COP-Waiver program or a

total of \$41 million a year. This, combined with several other no-cost policy changes, would enable Wisconsin to take a giant step in the direction of long-term care redesign that your constituents on waiting lists would like to see.

Other priorities in the budget include increased funding for Elderly and Disabled Transportation programs funded with a gas tax increase, and expansion of the Ombudsman program, Benefit Specialists program and Elder Abuse programs funded by eliminating the \$25 senior citizen tax credit for higher income seniors.

In conclusion, the really good news in the budget is the projected decrease in nursing home utilization and decrease in the overall Medical Assistance caseload. On behalf of older persons and people with disabilities, I urge you to take the wonderful opportunity that exists in this budget to continue that positive trend, ~~and~~ to provide cost-effective long-term care services that is preferred by the real people who comprise those waiting lists.

My name is Dave Nelson and I am president of Wisconsin Smokers' Rights. I appreciate the opportunity to address the members of the state Joint Committee on Finance about the proposal in the budget to raise the cigarette tax by 5 cents per pack.

Our group represents [number] of adult smokers in our state who are fed up with measures clearly aimed at punishing us for the legal choice we've made to smoke. We firmly believe that our government should not use taxes, restrictive ordinances, or any other actions as weapons to control our lives.

The governor's budget includes a proposal to increase the cigarette tax by five cents, bringing the tax to 49 cents per pack. Some have argued that smokers should be grateful that only a five cent tax is being proposed and not the 56 cents per pack increase over two years that was proposed last year.

On the contrary, we are against this tax for several reasons:

- Cigarettes are one of the highest taxed products in this country, and Wisconsin smokers already pay enough taxes for their cigarettes. Legislators have already indicated that this 5-cent increase is just the beginning. Smokers, they said, can expect to be hit with incremental tax increases over several years.
- There is no need for a tax increase. After all, Wisconsin is not currently facing a budget crisis. If our state treasury needs more money, legislators need to come up with fair and effective ways to generate it — like cutting unnecessary spending.
- It is unfair to single out one group of citizens to pay for services that all of us benefit from. If our state needs money for particular programs or to balance the budget, every citizen in the state should have to contribute to the effort — not just smokers.
- Sales taxes increases invariably mean declining sales for retailers. And tobacco sales account for a large percentage of most retail stores' profits. This tax increase would amount to nothing more than a drain on legitimate retail profits. And after all, cigarettes are a legal product for adult smokers to purchase and retailers to sell.
- Tobacco products are an easy target for tax increases. Not everyone smokes and those that don't are eager to vote yes for a tax that won't apply to them.

DAVID NELSON

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WISCONSIN SMOKERS RIGHTS COALITION

- A tax increase on adult smokers is not the way to stop kids from smoking. Last year, the Special Committee on Minors and Tobacco advocated the 56-cent-per-pack increase as a way to discourage minors from buying cigarettes. However, studies have clearly shown that raising cigarette taxes does not lead to an overall reduction in smoking. When cigarette taxes are raised people don't stop smoking, they just change their buying habits. They purchase low-cost brands, cross state borders for lower taxed products, or turn to the underground market. If we are going to address underage smoking, we must focus on education, enforcement, and parental involvement. The problem won't be solved by making retailers or their adult customers the scapegoats.

I urge the members of the committee, on behalf of Wisconsin Smokers' Rights, to strike the 5-cent-per-pack increase from the 1997 budget proposal. Thank you.