

WISCONSIN STATE
LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE HEARING
RECORDS

1997-98

(session year)

Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on
Education
(SC-Ed)

File Naming Example:

Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

- 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt01a
- 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt01b
- 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt02

NOTICES ...

- Committee Hearings ... CH (Public Hearing Announcements)
- **

- Executive Sessions ... ES
- **

- Committee Reports ... CR
- **

- Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP
- **

INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE
CLERK FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

- Appointments ... Appt
- **

Name:

- Clearinghouse Rules ... CRule
- **

- Hearing Records ... HR (bills and resolutions)
- **

- Miscellaneous ... Misc
- 97hr_SC-Ed_Misc_pt37

Attendance

Committee Meeting Attendance Sheet

Senate Committee on Education

Date: Ap 23 Meeting Type: Hearing
Location: 119 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd

Committee Member

Present

Absent

Excused

Sen. Calvin Potter, Chair

Sen. Robert Jauch

Sen. Kevin Shibilski

Sen. Richard Grobschmidt

Sen. Alberta Darling

Sen. Joanne Huelsman

Sen. Carol Bueftner

Totals:

7

0

0

Paul Rusk

Paul Rusk, Committee Clerk

Committee Meeting Attendance Sheet

Senate Committee on Education

Date: Apr 23 97 Meeting Type: Exec Session
Location: 119 Martin Luther King Jr

| <u>Committee Member</u> | <u>Present</u> | <u>Absent</u> | <u>Excused</u> |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Sen. Calvin Potter, Chair | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sen. Robert Jauch | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sen. Kevin Shibilski | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sen. Richard Grobschmidt | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sen. Alberta Darling | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sen. Joanne Huelsman | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sen. Carol Buettner | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Totals: _____

Paul Rusk, Committee Clerk

CALVIN J. POTTER
State Senator



Wisconsin State Senate

MEMO

TO: Invited Speakers, Hearing on Technical College System
FROM: Cal Potter
RE: TIME CHANGE-April 9 Hearing
DATE: April 2, 1997

Enclosed is a hearing notice for the hearing next week. Please note that we will begin at 9:30 a.m. rather than the previously announced 9:00 a.m. The budget briefing is first on the agenda.

If you have any questions, please call Paul or Carla in my office. We look forward to hearing from you next week.

STATE OF WISCONSIN

To Paul

Date 3-11-97 Time 4:38

WHILE YOU WERE OUT

M. Trinder
of Paul

Phone _____

| | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Telephoned | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Please Call | |
| Called to See You | | Rush | |
| Returned Your Call | | Will Call Again | |

Message # 266-3427
Pls. 4 message page
to send message for
Paul to get to office.



Party Receiving Call



State Historical Society of Wisconsin

816 State Street ♦ Madison, Wisconsin 53706-1488 ♦ 608/264-6400 ♦ Fax: 264-6404

*Office of the Director
608/264-6440*

March 13, 1997

Hon. Calvin Potter
Wisconsin Senate
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707

Dear Senator Potter:

I read the article in today's paper about the Senate Education Committee's hearing for UW with interest. It occurred to me that your committee might consider something similar for the State Historical Society.

If you think the committee would find useful a general review of our programs, with particular emphasis on our educational role, I would be delighted talk further with you about this.

Sincerely,

George L. Vogt
Director

(23)

(bring along
office of
school
services)

D

April 15, 1997

George Vogt, Director
State Historical Society of Wisconsin
816 State Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53706-1488

Dear Mr. Vogt:

To follow up on phone conversations with your office, enclosed is a hearing notice for your budget presentation to the Senate Education Committee scheduled for April 23. We look forward to seeing you at 9 a.m. in the Joint Finance Area of 119 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. It is possible we will be "bumped" to a smaller hearing room, but this is unlikely at this point.

The Department of Administration will begin with a brief budget overview of the Governor's recommendations. I understand you are planning a panel presentation of the educational components of your program. We look forward to meeting with you and your colleagues.

If you have any questions, please let us know.

Sincerely,

CALVIN POTTER
State Senator
9th Senate District

CP/pr

Enclosure

cc: Bob Hanle, DOA

Urgent

POST OFFICE BOX 2502
MADISON, WISCONSIN 53701-2502
Voice Mail 608-283-3131

Fact Sheet: Reasons to Oppose Legislation (SB 106) That Would Fundamentally Change Wisconsin's Homeschooling Law

Wisconsin Senate Bill 106 (SB 106) would fundamentally change Wisconsin's homeschooling law by giving the state the authority to determine who is eligible to homeschool. This bill is unnecessary, poorly timed, would not work, and would seriously undermine Wisconsin's homeschools by increasing the state's power and control over homeschools and decreasing homeschooling freedoms, rights, and responsibilities. SB 106 should be stopped as soon as possible.

This Fact Sheet is addressed both to members of the general public, including legislators, and to homeschoolers. Part I provides background information and the text of SB 106. Part II offers general reasons to oppose the bill. Part III explains in more detail how the bill would affect homeschoolers and why we oppose it so strongly. Suggestions for ways to oppose the bill are in Part IV, "What We Can Do." The most important first step is to call the Senators who introduced the bill and ask them to withdraw it.

Part I Background and Text of SB 106

Wisconsin has one of the most reasonable homeschooling laws in the nation. The current law protects both the rights and responsibilities of homeschooling families and the interests of the state. It holds homeschoolers accountable and requires that they meet the same criteria as other private schools. Homeschoolers who do not comply with the law may be prosecuted for truancy.

SB 106 reads as follows:

An Act to amend 118.15 (4) of the statutes; relating to: eligibility to attend a home-based private educational program.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. 118.15 (4) of the statutes is amended to read: 118.15 (4) Instruction in a home-based private educational program that meets all of the criteria under s. 118.165 (1) may be substituted for attendance at a public or private school unless the child has been found to be in need of protection or services under s. 938.13 (6) or (6m) or to have violated an ordinance enacted under s. 118.163 (2) or (2m).
Section 2. Initial applicability. (1) This act first applies to children found to be in need of protection or services or to have violated an ordinance under section 118.163 (2) or (2m) on the effective date of this subsection. (END)

Notes: The underlining indicates the words SB 106 would add to the current homeschooling law. S. 938.13 (6) or (6m) and 118.163 (2) or (2m) deal with truancy.

Part II General Reasons to Oppose SB106

• **SB 106 is unnecessary.** Wisconsin's current homeschooling law has worked well since 1984. Evidence has not been presented that truants are flocking to homeschooling and should be prevented from doing so. Under existing law, people who have been charged with truancy and who then begin homeschooling can still be prosecuted for those truancy charges. Homeschoolers who do not comply with the requirements of the homeschooling law can be prosecuted. In addition, there are already a wide range of truancy laws.

• **SB 106 would undermine one of Wisconsin's most important educational assets, its homeschools.**

Wisconsin needs a reasonable homeschooling law so families can find an educational alternative that works well for them. Some families choose public schools; others choose private schools, including homeschools. To function effectively as alternatives to conventional schools, private schools, including homeschools, need the flexibility to operate independently of the state educational bureaucracy. By giving the state the authority to determine who is eligible to homeschool, SB 106 seriously threatens that independence. It does not make sense to undermine the thousands of homeschools that are working well in the hopes of keeping out a few families for whom homeschooling might not work well.

• **SB 106 sets a dangerous precedent of state control over private education.** See the preceding point.

• **SB 106 is poorly timed.** The Wisconsin Assembly is appointing a subcommittee to study truancy. It would make much more sense to wait for its findings than to pass yet one more truancy law.

• **SB 106 would not work.** Truancy is a complex problem that will not be solved or even mitigated by preventing truants from homeschooling. It is better to use existing laws that provide for schools to offer truants alternative programs and contracts with non-sectarian private schools. In addition, homeschooling often works for young people who have had difficulty learning in a conventional school setting.

• **SB 106 violates two fundamental principles of American jurisprudence.** The current homeschooling law is based on two principles. One is parents' right to choose for their children an education consistent with their principles and beliefs. The second is "innocent until proven guilty." If homeschoolers do not comply with the law, they can be charged with truancy and prosecuted. To give the state the authority to determine who is eligible to homeschool would violate both these principles. It would give the state more authority than parents in determining how children should be educated and force us to ask whether children belong to the state.

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Part III. Additional Information for Homeschoolers

Homeschoolers have extra incentive to oppose SB 106 because the bill would affect us most directly. Here are additional reasons we oppose SB 106. (Note: These points are necessarily brief presentations of sometimes complex ideas. For clearer, more detailed explanations, see "Special Bulletin for Homeschoolers, March, 1997," available from WPA.)

- **By giving the state the authority to determine who is eligible to homeschool, SB 106 means that we would have to qualify to homeschool before we could submit our form PI-1206 to the DPI.** To be sure, few if any of our children have been found to be habitual truants, but once the principle is established that the state has the authority to determine eligibility, who knows what additional requirements it will impose on prospective homeschoolers.

- As homeschoolers, we can be prosecuted for truancy if we fail to comply with the homeschooling law. **Therefore, SB 106 could be used to prosecute current homeschoolers for truancy and thereby prevent us from continuing to homeschool.** In addition, new, harsher measures were enacted as part of the Juvenile Justice Code in 1995, despite the efforts of parents working through WPA to stop this legislation. This means that when families are prosecuted for truancy, judges are to preserve the unity of the family "whenever appropriate." (Earlier laws used the stronger phrase "whenever possible.") Social workers and judges are to use "most effective" measures. (Previous laws called for "least restrictive.") Parents of children who are charged with truancy can be ordered "to participate in mental health treatment, anger management, individual or family counseling or parent training and education." (For more information, see WPA Newsletter #45, April, 1995.)

- **We homeschoolers oppose this bill because it is clearly a bill directed against homeschooling.** It is not a reasonable attempt to solve truancy problems.

- **SB 106 would open Wisconsin's homeschooling law.** Note that the language from SB 106 would be put directly into the homeschooling law. Once a law is open in the legislature, it is much easier to change that law in a whole range of ways. We want to maintain Wisconsin's homeschooling law.

- **As homeschoolers we are unwilling to surrender our freedoms, rights and responsibilities** in a misguided attempt to supposedly keep out a few families for whom homeschooling might not work. In fact, many of us feel a moral obligation to help make the benefits of homeschooling available to other families, to support and assist others as we ourselves were supported when we began homeschooling. We realize that we face much more serious threats from the state's increasing its authority over homeschooling and families than we do from the possibility of a few families whose children have been truant not complying with the homeschooling law. We also realize that if we do not want others to judge us to see if we are qualified to homeschool, we cannot judge potential homeschoolers. In addition, we do not need a law to prevent large numbers of truants from turning to homeschooling. If this law is not passed, there will not be large numbers of truants beginning homeschooling.

Part IV. What We Can Do

- **Contact the two Senators who introduced SB 106,** Roger Breske (608-266-2509 or 715-454-6575 in his district) and Timothy Weeden (608-266-2253 or 608-362-7877 in his district), and ask them to withdraw the bill. It is very important that as many people call them as possible.

- **Contact our Representative in the Wisconsin Assembly and our State Senator or their aides.** Their names and phone numbers are available from the public library or the Legislative Hotline (800-362-9472). Share our concerns about SB 106. Ask them to refuse to cosponsor the bill (or to withdraw their names if they have already signed on), to vote against it, and to encourage their colleagues either to withdraw the bill or not to report it out of committee.

- The Senate Education Committee has scheduled a **hearing on SB 106 for Wednesday, April 9 at 9:30 AM** in the Joint Finance area behind the Senate Chamber on the first floor of the building at 119 Martin Luther King Blvd. (This building is near the capitol and is being used by the legislature during renovations on the capitol.) Plan now to attend to show our opposition to the bill. (People who attend hearings may testify for or against the bill under consideration or for information only. People who do not want to testify may still make their voices heard by registering either for or against the bill.) Important note: If SB 106 is withdrawn, the hearing on this bill will not be held. To find out whether the hearing is proceeding as scheduled, call the WPA Voice Mail at 608-283-3131 on April 7 or 8 for a recorded message with updated info.

- **Share this information with others.** Make copies of this Fact Sheet in its entirety (including WPA's letterhead) and give them to other homeschoolers, parents who are concerned about maintaining their rights, and others who might be interested.

- **Join homeschoolers and other parents who are working to maintain parental rights and responsibilities. Become a member of Wisconsin Parents Association.** Membership is \$20 per year and includes a subscription to the WPA Newsletter, special bulletins, and discounts on conferences and handbooks.

- **Purchase a copy of WPA's handbook, *Homeschooling in Wisconsin: At Home With Learning*** for more information about homeschooling and ways of maintaining our rights and responsibilities. To understand more about legislation, see especially pp. 90-103 and 151-214 of the handbook.

- **Attend WPA's 14th annual Home Education Conference** on Friday and Saturday, April 25-26 at the University Center of UW—Stevens Point. It includes 75 workshops for beginning and experienced homeschoolers; a vendor area with 70 vendors; and an excellent opportunity to meet other homeschoolers, find support, and renew your commitment to homeschooling. For a free conference registration packet, call 608-283-3131.

Wisconsin Parents Association (WPA) is a state-wide grassroots organization that has been working since 1984 to serve the needs of individual homeschoolers, to maintain the right of parents to choose for their children an education consistent with their principles and beliefs, and to counter challenges to Wisconsin's reasonable homeschooling law. People interested in homeschooling are welcome to join WPA.



FAX TRANSMITTAL MEMO

1825 North Bluemound Drive, PO Box 2277, Appleton, WI 54913-2277

Date: April 8, 1997 FAX Phone: 414-735-2582
From: H. Victor Baldi Office Phone: 414-735-5731
To: Senator Potter FAX Phone: 608-267-6796
cc to Ed Chin 608-266-1285 Location/Town: Madison

No of Pages (including this one): 5

If you do not receive all pages, please dial (414) 735-2471.

Message:



1825 N. Bluemound Drive
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 Appleton, WI 54913-2277
 Telephone 414-735-5600
 TDD 414-735-2497
 FAX No. 414-735-2582

April 8, 1997

The Honorable Calvin Potter
 Chair, Committee on Education
 Wisconsin State Senate
 State Capitol
 P.O. Box 7882
 Madison, WI 53707-7882

Dear Senator Potter:

Thank you for permitting me to exercise the option of presenting written testimony on behalf of the Wisconsin Technical College System Administrators' Association. As I indicated, my Wednesday mid-day is committed to a meeting of Clintonville area leaders who continue to provide active counsel with respect to postsecondary educational needs in their portion of Fox Valley Technical College's service area.

I will be pleased to amplify any portion of my remarks should you wish to follow-up on points raised. Again, I wish to reiterate the appreciation of my colleagues for the support and resources provided to the Wisconsin Technical College System. For our part, we will continue to provide quality programming and services in support of the state's economic well-being.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Cordially,

H. Victor Baldi, Ph.D.
 President

cc: Rd Chin

**Written Testimony for the Senate Education Committee
April 9, 1997**

**Dr. H. Victor Baldi, President
Fox Valley Technical College**

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee to testify on some aspects of the budget bill which impact the Technical College System, in general, and Fox Valley Technical College, in particular. The funds provided to the WTCS by the Legislature provide an important supplement to the local resources available to the districts. As president of Fox Valley Technical College, my primary function and that of my colleagues who head the fifteen other technical college districts is to use all of these funds wisely to advance the multi-faceted mission of the state's technical colleges. We believe that we have a good track record with respect to our management of these funds in the past. Collectively, we hope that you will continue to provide adequate funding to the WTCS to ensure that we can continue to meet the needs of the state and its people for a quality system for education and training for work.

An important part of the state's biennial budget process is the setting of the state's spending priorities for the next several years. My colleagues and I understand the need of the Legislature to balance the competing claim of other agencies and programs. At the same time, we hope you keep in mind during your deliberations the importance of investing in the state's future through the provision of education and training both for our young people and others who are just entering the labor market and for those who are already at work.

I. General State Aid

The state budget bill proposes that General State Aid for the Technical Colleges be increased by 1% in each year of the biennium. (See LFB Summary, Page 657, Item #2.) While I appreciate the difficulties facing the Governor and the Legislature in meeting existing commitments to funding two-thirds of the costs of K-12 schools and in providing sufficient funds in important areas such as corrections and transportation, the amount proposed for state aid for the WTCS is insufficient to meet the needs of my college or that of the other technical colleges.

In the last biennium, the WTCS received no increase in state aid. Although the proposed 1% increases represent an improvement over the level funding of the current biennium, these 1% increases will continue to put a strain on local technical college budgets. At the most basic level, a 1% increase in each year of the biennium will not permit the technical college districts to keep up with ordinary inflationary increases to operating costs. Districts, including my own, will continue to need to find other sources of revenue to make up the difference between what the state provides and what is needed to run the colleges. Despite efforts to economize and to control costs, districts will need to increase property tax levies just to maintain existing services. Meanwhile, at the same time resources are being limited, state policy makers look to technical college districts as having the answers for issues as diverse as providing opportunities and incentives to keep at-risk youth in school, ensuring labor market entrants have the skills needed in today's labor market, and helping W-2 clients attain economic self-sufficiency. Technical colleges simply cannot meet all of these competing needs with minimal increases to our revenue base.

Written Testimony for the Senate Education Committee
April 9, 1997
Page 2

If the state revenue picture improves, I sincerely hope the Legislature will consider providing additional assistance for the technical colleges beyond the 1% levels proposed by the Governor. If additional resources become available, we at Fox Valley would use a portion of those resources to meet basic operational needs. In my district, these additional funds would go to expand high demand programs such as our Computer Information Systems Program and to expand apprenticeship training in the skilled trades and crafts.

The WTCS had originally requested 4½% increases in each year of the biennium to keep the WTCS operating at its current level and keep property tax levies stable. Recognizing the constraints within which you are operating, I hope that you will rethink the Governor's proposal and consider increases in the 2½% range for each year of the biennium.

II. Faculty Development

Educational technology has been a major area of investment by the WTCS over the last several years. We have invested in computers for our faculty, developed networks with K-12 districts and the UW System, and worked with other technical college districts to share programs and resources across technical college district boundaries. Many of these activities have helped to expand access to our educational facilities and services while controlling costs.

The skills and knowledge of our own instructors are key to the effectiveness of the WTCS's educational services. I would ask you to support the Governor's proposal to support faculty development in the use of instructional technology (LFB Summary, Page 658, Item #3). With these funds, each technical college would establish Teaching Innovation Centers. These Centers will assist faculty in the application of technology to instruction. As part of the overall "TEACH Wisconsin" initiative, \$832,000 annually is earmarked for innovative technical college teachers to share their expertise with their colleagues on how to incorporate the enormous potential of information technologies into improving the technical college curriculum and the delivery of instruction.

Just as we urge businesses in our community to invest in upgrading and expanding the resources of their workers, we need to ensure that our own faculty and staff not only have access to the latest technology, but also know how to exploit its potential. Presently, a number of technical colleges are sharing numerous costly programs across district boundaries using telecommunications technology. My own district, for example, shares a Dental Hygienist program electronically across district lines with Northcentral, Chippewa Valley, and Western Wisconsin. Beyond sharing programs, we also need to improve and augment our educational programs by increasing access to current information about a subject, developing more effective presentations for complex instructional material, and adapting instructional approaches to the learning styles of our students. Assisting technical college teachers in developing their skills in applying technology to instruction is essential to expanding educational opportunity to new learners and to improving its effectiveness.

Written Testimony for the Senate Education Committee
April 9, 1997
Page 3

III. Youth Options Program

I wholeheartedly support the "Youth Options Program" (LFB Summary, Page 482, Item #31). At Fox Valley Technical College, we currently enroll high school age students in WTCS courses under a number of different arrangements, including at-risk students who can attend in lieu of high school, and highly motivated students who can take individual accelerated technical college level courses. The budget bill would expand the options to allow academically qualified students to attend technical college, on a full- or part-time basis, in the 11th and 12th grade. It would also permit these students to use the technical college courses they take to satisfy the academic requirements for a high school diploma issued by the school district. The program would be voluntary and the decision to participate would be made solely by students and their parents. I think that this is an important adjunct to the Governor's proposal to expand public school choice.

IV. Youth Apprenticeship Charges

Finally, there is a statutory change proposed in the budget bill that I think needs more thought. Specifically, the bill would limit the amount that technical college districts can charge school districts for Youth Apprenticeship instruction to no more than the school district's average instructional cost per pupil (LFB Summary, Page 659, Item #8). Technical colleges need the ability to recover their costs of providing services under a Youth Apprenticeship contract. Therefore, I and my colleagues question the reason for limiting the authority of a technical college district to determine the appropriate contract amount with a school district, especially in those instances when due to the unique nature of the Youth Apprenticeship program, the cost may exceed the school district's average instructional costs.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to present testimony. I again express my hope that if the revenue picture for the 1997-99 biennium improves, the technical colleges will be high on the Legislature's priority list.