

**BILL HISTORY FOR SENATE BILL 172 (LRB -2490 )**

An Act to amend 111.322 (2m) (a) and 111.322 (2m) (b); and to create 106.06 (6), 146.997 and 230.45 (1) (L) of the statutes; relating to: discharge or other retaliation or discrimination against an employe of a health care facility or a health care provider who reports a violation of the law or a violation of a clinical or ethical standard by the health care facility or health care provider or by an employe of the health care facility or health care provider and providing a penalty. (FE)

1999

05-25. S. Introduced by Senators **George, Robson, Baumgart, Burke, Cowles, Darling, Grobschmidt, Moen, Plache, Roessler and Rosenzweig**; cosponsored by Representatives **Underheim, Carpenter, Albers, Black, Bock, Boyle, Coggs, Colon, Cullen, Goetsch, Hahn, Hebl, Kelso, Kreuser, Krusick, La Fave, Ladwig, Lassa, J. Lehman, M. Lehman, Miller, Musser, Olsen, Pettis, Plouff, Pocan, Richards, Sinicki, Staskunas, Walker, Wasserman, Waukau and Ziegelbauer.**

05-25. S. Read first time and referred to committee on Judiciary and Consumer Affairs ..... 158

05-27. S. Fiscal estimate received.

05-27. S. Fiscal estimate received.

2000

01-25. S. Public hearing held.

03-06. S. Executive action taken.

03-07. S. Report introduction and adoption of Senate substitute amendment 1 recommended by committee on Judiciary and Consumer Affairs, Ayes 5, Noes 0 (LRB s0342) ..... 467

03-07. S. Report passage as amended recommended by committee on Judiciary and Consumer Affairs, Ayes 4, Noes 1 ..... 467

03-07. S. Available for scheduling.

03-07. S. Read a second time ..... 470

03-07. S. Senate substitute amendment 1 adopted ..... 470

03-07. S. Ordered to a third reading ..... 470

03-07. S. Rules suspended ..... 470

03-07. S. Read a third time and passed, Ayes 29, Noes 4 ..... 470

03-07. S. Ordered immediately messaged ..... 474

03-09. A. Received from Senate ..... 734

03-09. A. Read first time ..... 734

03-09. A. Rules suspended and taken up ..... 734

03-09. A. Read a second time ..... 734

03-09. A. Ordered to a third reading ..... 734

03-09. A. Rules suspended ..... 734

03-09. A. Read a third time and concurred in, Ayes 97, Noes 0 ..... 734

03-09. A. Ordered immediately messaged ..... 734

03-14. S. Received from Assembly concurred in.

**1999  
ENROLLED BILL**

99en SB-172

**ADOPTED DOCUMENTS:**

Orig     Engr

S SubAmdt 1

9950342 2

Amendments to above (if none, write "NONE"):

None

Corrections - show date (if none, write "NONE"):

None

Topic

Whistleblower protection for  
health care workers

3/15/02  
Date

Pete Plym  
Enrolling Drafter

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**SENATE SUBSTITUTE AMENDMENT 1,  
TO 1999 SENATE BILL 172**

March 7, 2000 – Offered by COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS.

1     **AN ACT to amend** 111.322 (2m) (a) and 111.322 (2m) (b); and **to create** 106.06  
2           (6), 146.997 and 230.45 (1) (L) of the statutes; **relating to:** disciplinary action  
3           against an employe of a health care facility or a health care provider who  
4           reports a violation of the law or a violation of a clinical or ethical standard by  
5           the health care facility or health care provider or by an employe of the health  
6           care facility or health care provider and providing a penalty.

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

7           **SECTION 1.** 106.06 (6) of the statutes is created to read:  
8           106.06 (6) The division shall receive complaints under s. 146.997 (4) (a) of  
9           disciplinary action taken in violation of s. 146.997 (3) and shall process the  
10          complaints in the same manner that employment discrimination complaints are  
11          processed under s. 111.39.

1           **SECTION 2.** 111.322 (2m) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

2           111.322 (2m) (a) The individual files a complaint or attempts to enforce any  
3 right under s. 103.02, 103.10, 103.13, 103.28, 103.32, 103.455, 103.50, 104.12,  
4 109.03, 109.07 ~~or~~, 109.075 or 146.997 or ss. 101.58 to 101.599 or 103.64 to 103.82.

5           **SECTION 3.** 111.322 (2m) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

6           111.322 (2m) (b) The individual testifies or assists in any action or proceeding  
7 held under or to enforce any right under s. 103.02, 103.10, 103.13, 103.28, 103.32,  
8 103.455, 103.50, 104.12, 109.03, 109.07 ~~or~~, 109.075 or 146.997 or ss. 101.58 to  
9 101.599 or 103.64 to 103.82.

10           **SECTION 4.** 146.997 of the statutes is created to read:

11           **146.997 Health care worker protection. (1) DEFINITIONS.** In this section:

12           (a) “Department” means the department of workforce development.

13           (b) “Disciplinary action” has the meaning given in s. 230.80 (2).

14           (c) “Health care facility” means a facility, as defined in s. 647.01 (4), or any  
15 hospital, nursing home, community–based residential facility, county home, county  
16 infirmary, county hospital, county mental health complex, tuberculosis sanatorium  
17 or other place licensed or approved by the department of health and family services  
18 under s. 49.70, 49.71, 49.72, 50.03, 50.35, 51.08, 51.09, 58.06, 252.073 or 252.076 or  
19 a facility under s. 45.365, 51.05, 51.06, 233.40, 233.41, 233.42 or 252.10.

20           (d) “Health care provider” means any of the following:

21           1. A nurse licensed under ch. 441.

22           2. A chiropractor licensed under ch. 446.

23           3. A dentist licensed under ch. 447.

24           4. A physician, podiatrist or physical therapist licensed under ch. 448.

- 1           5. An occupational therapist, occupational therapy assistant, physician  
2 assistant or respiratory care practitioner certified under ch. 448.
- 3           6. A dietician certified under subch. V of ch. 448.
- 4           7. An optometrist licensed under ch. 449.
- 5           8. A pharmacist licensed under ch. 450.
- 6           9. An acupuncturist certified under ch. 451.
- 7           10. A psychologist licensed under ch. 455.
- 8           11. A social worker, marriage and family therapist or professional counselor  
9 certified under ch. 457.
- 10          12. A speech–language pathologist or audiologist licensed under subch. II of ch.  
11 459 or a speech and language pathologist licensed by the department of public  
12 instruction.
- 13          13. A massage therapist or bodyworker issued a license of registration under  
14 subch. XI of ch. 440.
- 15          14. An emergency medical technician licensed under s. 146.50 (5) or a first  
16 responder.
- 17          15. A partnership of any providers specified under subds. 1. to 14.
- 18          16. A corporation or limited liability company of any providers specified under  
19 subds. 1. to 14. that provides health care services.
- 20          17. An operational cooperative sickness care plan organized under ss. 185.981  
21 to 185.985 that directly provides services through salaried employees in its own  
22 facility.
- 23          18. A hospice licensed under subch. IV of ch. 50
- 24          19. A rural medical center, as defined in s. 50.50 (11).
- 25          20. A home health agency, as defined in s. 50.49 (1) (a).

1           **(2) REPORTING PROTECTED.** (a) Any employe of a health care facility or of a health  
2 care provider who is aware of any information, the disclosure of which is not  
3 expressly prohibited by any state law or rule or any federal law or regulation, that  
4 would lead a reasonable person to believe any of the following may report that  
5 information to any agency, as defined in s. 111.32 (6) (a), of the state; to any  
6 professionally recognized accrediting or standard–setting body that has accredited,  
7 certified or otherwise approved the health care facility or health care provider; to any  
8 officer or director of the health care facility or health care provider; or to any employe  
9 of the health care facility or health care provider who is in a supervisory capacity or  
10 in a position to take corrective action:

11           1. That the health care facility or health care provider or any employe of the  
12 health care facility or health care provider has violated any state law or rule or  
13 federal law or regulation.

14           2. That there exists any situation in which the quality of any health care service  
15 provided by the health care facility or health care provider or by any employe of the  
16 health care facility or health care provider violates any standard established by any  
17 state law or rule or federal law or regulation or any clinical or ethical standard  
18 established by a professionally recognized accrediting or standard–setting body and  
19 poses a potential risk to public health or safety.

20           (b) An agency or accrediting or standard–setting body that receives a report  
21 under par. (a) shall, within 5 days after receiving the report, notify the health care  
22 facility or health provider that is the subject of the report, in writing, that a report  
23 alleging a violation specified in par. (a) 1. or 2. has been received and provide the  
24 health care facility or health care provider with a written summary of the contents  
25 of the report, unless the agency, or accrediting or standard–setting body determines

1 that providing that notification and summary would jeopardize an ongoing  
2 investigation of a violation alleged in the report. The notification and summary may  
3 not disclose the identity of the person who made the report.

4 (c) Any employe of a health care facility or health care provider may initiate,  
5 participate in or testify in any action or proceeding in which a violation specified in  
6 par. (a) 1. or 2. is alleged.

7 (d) Any employe of a health care facility or health care provider may provide  
8 any information relating to an alleged violation specified in par. (a) 1. or 2. to any  
9 legislator or legislative committee.

10 **(3) DISCIPLINARY ACTION PROHIBITED.** (a) No health care facility or health care  
11 provider and no employe of a health care facility or health care provider may take  
12 disciplinary action against, or threaten to take disciplinary action against, any  
13 person because the person reported in good faith any information under sub. (2) (a),  
14 in good faith initiated, participated in or testified in any action or proceeding under  
15 sub. (2) (c) or provided in good faith any information under sub. (2) (d) or because the  
16 health care facility, health care provider or employe believes that the person reported  
17 in good faith any information under sub. (2) (a), in good faith initiated, participated  
18 in or testified in any action or proceeding under sub. (2) (c) or provided in good faith  
19 any information under sub. (2) (d).

20 (b) No health care facility or health care provider and no employe of a health  
21 care facility or health care provider may take disciplinary action against, or threaten  
22 to take disciplinary action against, any person on whose behalf another person  
23 reported in good faith any information under sub. (2) (a), in good faith initiated,  
24 participated in or testified in any action or proceeding under sub. (2) (c) or provided  
25 in good faith any information under sub. (2) (d) or because the health care facility,

1 health care provider or employe believes that another person reported in good faith  
2 any information under sub. (2) (a), in good faith initiated, participated in or testified  
3 in any action or proceeding under sub. (2) (c) or provided in good faith any  
4 information under sub. (2) (d) on that person's behalf.

5 (c) For purposes of pars. (a) and (b), an employe is not acting in good faith if the  
6 employe reports any information under sub. (2) (a) that the employe knows or should  
7 know is false or misleading, initiates, participates in or testifies in any action or  
8 proceeding under sub. (2) (c) based on information that the employe knows or should  
9 know is false or misleading or provides any information under sub. (2) (d) that the  
10 employe knows or should know is false or misleading.

11 (4) ENFORCEMENT. (a) Subject to par. (b), any employe of a health care facility  
12 or health care provider who is subjected to disciplinary action, or who is threatened  
13 with disciplinary action, in violation of sub. (3) may file a complaint with the  
14 department under s. 106.06 (6). If the department finds that a violation of sub. (3)  
15 has been committed, the department may take such action under s. 111.39 as will  
16 effectuate the purpose of this section.

17 (b) Any employe of a health care facility operated by an agency, as defined in  
18 s. 111.32 (6) (a), of the state who is subjected to disciplinary action, or who is  
19 threatened with disciplinary action, in violation of sub. (3) may file a complaint with  
20 the personnel commission under s. 230.45 (1) (L). If the personnel commission finds  
21 that a violation of sub. (3) has been committed, the personnel commission may take  
22 such action under s. 111.39 as will effectuate the purpose of this section.

23 (c) Section 111.322 (2m) applies to a disciplinary action arising in connection  
24 with any proceeding under par. (a) or (b).



1           (5) CIVIL PENALTY. Any health care facility or health care provider and any  
2 employe of a health care facility or health care provider who takes disciplinary action  
3 against, or who threatens to take disciplinary action against, any person in violation  
4 of sub. (3) may be required to forfeit not more than \$1,000 for a first violation, not  
5 more than \$5,000 for a violation committed within 12 months of a previous violation  
6 and not more than \$10,000 for a violation committed within 12 months of 2 or more  
7 previous violations. The 12-month period shall be measured by using the dates of  
8 the violations that resulted in convictions.

9           (6) POSTING OF NOTICE. Each health care facility and health care provider shall  
10 post, in one or more conspicuous places where notices to employes are customarily  
11 posted, a notice in a form approved by the department setting forth employes' rights  
12 under this section. Any health care facility or health care provider that violates this  
13 subsection shall forfeit not more than \$100 for each offense.

14           **SECTION 5.** 230.45 (1) (L) of the statutes is created to read:

15           230.45 (1) (L) Receive complaints under s. 146.997 (4) (a) of disciplinary action  
16 taken in violation of s. 146.997 (3) and, except as provided in sub. (1m), process the  
17 complaints in the same manner that employment discrimination complaints are  
18 processed under s. 111.39.

19           **SECTION 6. Nonstatutory provisions.**

20           (1) EMPLOYE NOTIFICATION. Within 90 days after the effective date of this  
21 subsection, each health care facility, as defined in section 146.997 (1) (b) of the  
22 statutes, as created by this act, and each health care provider, as defined in section  
23 146.997 (1) (c) of the statutes, as created by this act, shall inform its employes of their  
24 rights and remedies under this act.

25           **SECTION 7. Initial applicability.**

