

Assembly

Record of Committee Proceedings

Committee on Children and Families

Assembly Bill 731

Relating to: child abuse and neglect prevention and making appropriations.

By Representatives Huebsch, Krug, Riley, Hasenohrl, Bock, Ziegelbauer, La Fave, Pohan, Turner, Carpenter, Plouff, Richards, Waukau, Staskunas and Lassa; cosponsored by Senators Wirch, Robson, Huelsman, Grobschmidt, Rude, Darling, Roessler and Rosenzweig.

February 8, 2000 Referred to committee on Children and Families.

February 22, 2000 **PUBLIC HEARING HELD**

Present: (10) Representatives Ladwig, Jeskewitz, Kreibich,
Freese, Grothman, Kestell, Miller, Coggs,
Colon and Sinicki.

Absent: (0) None.

Appearances for

- Bob Delaporte; Office of State Representative Mike Huebsch, 94th Assembly District
- Sarah Diedrick-Kasdorf, Wisconsin Counties Association
- Ramon Wagner, Community Advocates
- John Grace, Wisconsin Association of Family and Children's Agencies

Appearances against

- None.

Appearances for Information Only

- None.

Registrations for

- Nadine Schwab, Children's Trust Fund
- State Senator Joanne Huelsman, 11th Senate District
- Jennifer Kammerud, Wisconsin School Administrators Alliance
- Bill Cosh, Wisconsin Association of School Boards
- Michael Vaughan, Wisconsin Police Chiefs Association
- John Stocks, Wisconsin Education Association Council and Wisconsin Federation of Teachers
- Rev. Sue Moline Larson, Lutheran Office of Public Policy in Wisconsin

- Cory Mason; State Bar of Wisconsin, Children and Law Section
- Tim Witkowitz; State Bar of Wisconsin, Children and the Law Section
- Marc Herstand, National Association of Social Workers
- Charity Elesan, Dane County Executive and Dane County Board of Supervisors
- Kara Oakley, Aurora Health Care and Childrens Health System of Wisconsin
- State Senator Alberta Darling, 8th Senate District
- Patric Curby, City of Milwaukee
- Dismas Becker, Wisconsin Coalition of Marriage and Family Therapists, Professional Counselors and Social Workers
- Kathy Anderson, State Medical Society
- Liz Buchen, Lutheran Social Services
- Bob Andersen, Wisconsin Council on Children and Families
- Marjorie Morgan, Archdiocese of Milwaukee
- Steve Werner, Wisconsin Professional Police Association
- Leslie McAllister, Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin
- State Senator Robert Wirch, 22nd Senate District

Registrations against

- None.

March 2, 2000

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Present: (9) Representatives Ladwig, Jeskewitz, Kreibich, Freese, Grothman, Kestell, Miller, Colon and Sinicki.

Absent: (1) Representative Coggs.

Moved by Representative Freese, seconded by Representative Jeskewitz, that **Assembly Bill 731** be recommended for passage.

Ayes: (7) Representatives Ladwig, Jeskewitz, Kreibich, Freese, Miller, Colon and Sinicki.

Noes: (2) Representatives Grothman and Kestell.

Absent: (1) Representative Coggs.

PASSAGE RECOMMENDED, Ayes 7, Noes 2, Absent 1

Janine Hale
Committee Clerk

Assembly

Committee Report

The committee on **Children and Families**, reports and recommends:

Assembly Bill 731

Relating to: child abuse and neglect prevention and making appropriations.

By Representatives Huebsch, Krug, Riley, Hasenohrl, Bock, Ziegelbauer, La Fave, Pohan, Turner, Carpenter, Plouff, Richards, Waukau, Staskunas and Lassa; cosponsored by Senators Wirch, Robson, Huelsman, Grobschmidt, Rude, Darling, Roessler and Rosenzweig.

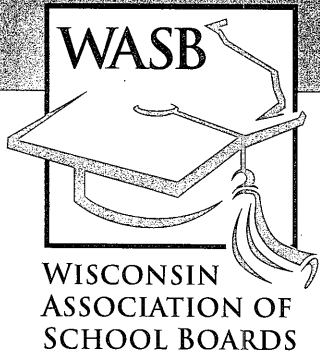
PASSAGE RECOMMENDED, Ayes 7, Noes 2, Absent 1

Ayes: (7) Representatives Ladwig, Jeskewitz, Kreibich, Freese, Miller, Colon and Sinicki.

Noes: (2) Representatives Grothman and Kestell.

Absent: (1) Representative Coggs.

Representative Bonnie Ladwig
Chair



122 W. WASHINGTON AVENUE, MADISON, WI 53703
PHONE: 608-257-2622 • FAX: 608-257-8386

KEN COLE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

To: Chairperson Bonnie Ladwig
Members of the Assembly Committee on Children and Families

From: Annette M. Talis, Legislative Services Coordinator

Re: AB 731—Relating to the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

Date: February 21, 2000

The WASB supports AB 731 because our membership recognizes that the academic performance of all children relates to many factors that influence youngsters both inside and outside public school buildings.

Specifically, the WASB delegates adopted the following position: “The WASB supports increasing efforts of all levels of government, private organizations, businesses and families in providing prevention, early intervention or other programs to solve the problems (such as gangs, violence, poverty, homelessness, hunger, unemployment, racism and injustice) that are being manifested in our communities, which would then enable schools to focus on academic not extracurricular endeavors.”

Sociological disadvantages have been correlated with low scores on assessments of student learning. AB 731 would provide funds for the prevention of child abuse and neglect, which is one sociological factor than can, in part, lead to low test scores.

This bill will help Wisconsin’s public schools promote high academic achievement for all children.

As public schools move into an era of accountability and assessment, we must work to give all children an opportunity for success. To the extent that educational policy and practice can accomplish this, the WASB will endeavor to meet this challenge. As state policymakers, you can support the efforts of public school officials by voting in favor of this bill.



To: Members of the Assembly Committee on Children & Families
From: NASW Wisconsin Chapter, Legislative and Social Policy Committee
Date: February 22, 2000
Subject: AB 731, Expansion of POCAN

The National Association of Social Workers, Wisconsin chapter supports the passage of AB 731, the expansion of the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (POCAN) Program. This legislation would go a long way in supporting families and ensuring better outcomes for children in Wisconsin.

It is important to understand that most maltreated children grow up to lead normal adult lives, and they don't grow up to abuse their own children or others. However, studies show abused and neglected children are all at greater risk for mental health problems, suicide attempts, alcohol abuse, drug use, and poor school performance. Perhaps most disturbing: physically abused and neglected children are significantly more likely than children with no histories of maltreatment to commit violent crimes as juveniles and adults. Pronounced differences between abused and neglected children and their nonabused counterparts can begin to emerge as early as age 8 or 9.

Jason DeParle's New York Times article, "Early Sex Abuse Hinders Many Women on Welfare" offers substantial evidence of the long-term effects of sexual abuse as a significant barrier to women on moving from welfare to the workplace. Welfare surpluses, therefore, should be available to fund child abuse prevention programs. AB 731 allows for the state to use some available welfare dollars to fight child abuse, by helping parents manage the stresses of raising children before unhealthy patterns develop.

Research on home visitation indicates that families who are provided parental guidance and links to health services essential to healthy growth and development of their children are less likely to perpetuate abuse and neglect. Studies of intensive home visitation efforts also show that participants are more likely to: become more rational health care consumers, immunize their children, smoke less, have higher employment rates, and show greater involvement in their children's education and complete their own education.

In 1998, after careful consideration in a Joint Legislative Council Committee, Wisconsin legislators passed the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect Bill, or commonly referred to as the POCAN bill. The first phase of POCAN began December 1998 with grants to nine counties and an Indian tribe to support the home visitation program and wraparound services for families at risk of abuse and neglect. Applications for grants were filed by 31 counties, far more than could be accommodated. The Legislative Council Committee supported extending the program to an additional 20 counties and three Indian tribes in the 1999-2001 budget. AB 731, which provides \$2.1 million in TANF funds to expand POCAN, provides us with an opportunity to fulfill the Committee's intention.

The people of Wisconsin clearly recognize the need to protect children, and are willing to support prevention programs. According to a statewide poll by We the People/Wisconsin, Wisconsin citizens see child abuse as an epidemic hidden from public view. Asked how the state might spend some of its tobacco settlement money over the next two years, 348 randomly selected adults named preventing child abuse as their top choice. We know that home visiting programs work, and the passage of this bill will demonstrate your commitment to keeping children safe and supporting Wisconsin's families.

For more information, please feel free to call Leslie McAllister, Co-Chair, NASW WI Legislative/Social Policy Committee at 608-256-3374 or Marc Herstand, Executive Director, NASW WI, at 608-257-6334.



**TO: Representative Bonnie Ladwig, Chair
Members, Children and Families Committee**

**FROM: Kathy Andersen, Associate Director
Government Relations**

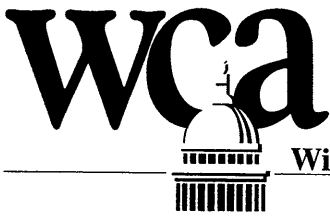
DATE: February 22, 2000

RE: Support for AB 731

On behalf of Wisconsin physicians, I urge your support for Assembly Bill 731, which would provide funding to expand the Child Abuse and Prevention grant program. The cost of abuse and neglect to our society is astronomical. Research has shown that abused children add to the already overburdened criminal justice and social services systems. Abused and neglected children receive welfare services, juvenile justice placements, sexual and substance abuse treatment, and teen pregnancy services.

From Ashland to Madison, home visitation prevention services have shown encouraging results in preventing abuse and neglect-related poor outcomes in children. Research has shown that these prevention programs, like most prevention programs, pay for themselves by enabling children to become responsible, productive members of our society.


On behalf of the members of the State Medical Society of Wisconsin, and the patients they serve, I request your support for AB 731.



Wisconsin Counties Association

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Members of the Assembly Committee on Children and Families

FROM: Sarah Diedrick-Kasdorf, Legislative Associate 

DATE: February 22, 2000

SUBJECT: Support for Assembly Bill 731

The Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) supports Assembly Bill 731 which expands the number of counties and tribes that receive grants under the child abuse and neglect prevention program. Specifically, the bill allows no more than 20 rural counties, nine urban counties and five Indian tribes to participate in the program. Current law allows only six rural counties, three urban counties and two Indian tribes to participate. In addition, the bill expands the revenues available to fund the program to \$2,158,000 in each fiscal year.

The Wisconsin Counties Association supported the creation of the prevention of child abuse and neglect program. Today, counties across the state not only continue to support the program, but also are advocating for its expansion.

It is a well-known fact that dollars used for prevention, or front-end services, can save money on the back end. Expanding the program to additional counties will result in less children being removed from their homes, less costs associated with juvenile justice programs, etc., all resulting in healthier, more stable families.

Unfortunately, state dollars provided to counties in the community aids and youth aids appropriations are insufficient to meet the needs of Wisconsin's citizens, thereby forcing counties to provide mostly back end services. Dollars, such as those provided by the POCAN program, enable counties to focus efforts on the front end.

WCA strongly urges your support for Assembly Bill 731.



Family & Children's Center

1707 Main Street
La Crosse WI 54601
(608) 785-0001

Healthy Families-La Crosse

The social isolation of families, the anxiety of parenthood, and the emotional disorder of people's lives continue to place newborns in at-risk family situations.

Healthy Families-La Crosse is an intensive home visiting program that is effective in preventing abuse and neglect in families with significant stresses. The families are referred to us by Franciscan Skemp Healthcare and Gundersen Lutheran based on the stresses in the parents' lives during the last trimester of pregnancy or at the time the baby is born. We currently serve only La Crosse County residents; our services are free and families participate voluntarily.

Following an assessment/interview at home, each family is matched with a Family Support Worker who visits them at least weekly in the baby's first year to teach parents about child development, help parents cope with the stresses of parenthood, keep the families linked to medical care, and help them use other resources in the community. Home visits may continue until the child is school-age, but most families stay in the program two or three years.

Health Related Outcomes

- All babies stay up-to-date with immunizations. In contrast, only 65 percent of 2-year-olds in La Crosse County are immunized.
- 97 % of the families do not have a substantiated child abuse report.
- All families remain linked to a medical home and many are transported or accompanied to clinic visits by their family support workers.
- Families' use of emergency rooms for infant medical care is reduced as they learn to utilize walk-in clinics and keep regular appointments.
- Developmental delays in infants are detected early and referrals are made.
- There are no second births to unwed teen mothers.

Daily Living Outcomes

- Mothers and fathers reduce their overall parental stress (pre- and post- tests).
- Parents become more aware of early brain development, child development and home safety.
- Where possible, fathers stay actively involved in their child's life.
- Families experience less social isolation.

For 1999, Healthy Families has a budget that will sustain about 105 families in the program at one time. The program continually has a waiting list.



**STATE BAR
of WISCONSIN**

5302 Eastpark Blvd.
P.O. Box 7158
Madison, WI 53707-7158

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Assembly Children and Families Committee
From: Tim Witkowiak, Children and the Law Section Chair
Date: February 22, 2000
Re: AB731 POCAN Legislation

The Children and the Law Section has long supported efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect. The Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (POCAN) program is an excellent program that helps achieve that goal.

AB731 would expand the POCAN program to 20 additional counties and three Native American Tribes in July of this year.

Every year the Criminal Justice system is plagued with prisoners that were abused or neglected as children. If we are ever to break the cycle of violence we must support programs like POCAN, which seek to prevent child abuse before it happens.

The Children and the Law Section feels that the state will more than recover the money spent on child abuse prevention because it will reduce the number of children who will enter the Criminal Justice system. The old adage of an ounce of prevention being worth a pound of cure seems appropriate here.

More than that, however, the Children and the Law Section feels that, as a society, we have an obligation to protect the best interest of all of our children. By turning a blind eye to child abuse we are condemning thousands of children to a life of abuse.

WE URGE THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO SUPPORT AB731.

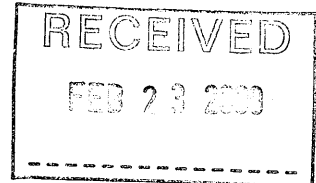
If you would like any additional information on the Children and the Law Section's position on child abuse prevention, do not hesitate to call Tim Witkowiak at 414/329-9500 or Cory Mason, Government Relations Coordinator for the State Bar of Wisconsin at 1/800-444-9404 x6128, email at 'cmason@wisbar.org'.



Marquardt, Sarah

From: Meg Scott [mscott@chorus.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 23, 2000 2:31 PM
To: Ladwig, Rep. Bonnie; Jeskewitz, Rep. Suzanne; Kreibich, Rep. Robin; Freese, Rep. Steve; Grothman, Rep. Glenn; Kestell, Rep. Steve; Miller, Rep. Mark; Coggs, Rep. Spencer; Colon Rep. Pedro; Sinicki, Rep. Christine
Cc: Bloomfield, Sandra; Beil, Marty; Lyons, Bob (Council 40); Abelson, Rich; Ahlstrom, Jane; Traas, Kevin; Jensen, Rep. Scott; Krug, Rep. Shirley
Subject: AB 731

Date: February 23, 2000



To: Representative Bonnie Ladwig, Chairperson, Assembly Committee on Children and Families
Representative Suzanne Jeskewitz, Committee Member
Representative Robin Kreibich, Committee Member
Representative Steve Freese, Committee Member
Representative Glenn Grothman, Committee Member
Representative Steve Kestell, Committee Member
Representative Mark Miller, Committee Member
Representative Spencer Coggs, Committee Member
Representative Pedro Colon, Committee Member
Representative Christine Sinicki, Committee Member

From: Dennis Boyer, Lobbyist
AFSCME Council 11
8033 Excelsior Drive, Suite A
Madison, WI 53717
608/836-6666
email: dennisb@midplains .net

Re: AB 731

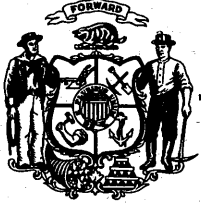
We represent many social workers throughout Wisconsin who work to protect children already identified as the victims of abuse and neglect. Our members recognize that home visiting programs that teach first-time parents how to interact with and care for their child are among the best ways to avert later incidents of abuse. New parents face a host of challenges and often need help learning how to adjust to the arrival of a new baby. Home visiting programs offer a perfect opportunity to assist these new families, and they have been found effective at preventing future abuse and neglect. There is a substantial body of research demonstrating the efficacy of programs that bring help to families in the first critical years of a child's life. It is during these months and years when parents are most responsive to learning how to best care for their child. Reaching parents early can prevent any harmful patterns from being established.

We know that these programs work, and that they should be expanded. There are still too many children in Wisconsin who suffer from abuse and neglect by parents who received no such services. By expanding these prevention services, we make the future of Wisconsin's children a little brighter.

We support this bill's expansion of prevention programs to twenty more counties and three additional tribes. We respectfully urge you to approve this legislation.

xc: Sandy Bloomfield
Marty Beil

Bob Lyons
Rich Abelson
Jane Ahlstrom
Kevin Traas
Representative Jensen
Representative Krug



Bonnie L. Ladwig

Assembly Children and Families Committee, Chairperson

TO: Assembly Children and Families Committee members
FROM: State Representative Bonnie Ladwig, Chair
DATE: March 6, 2000
RE: Information from WAFCA regarding AB 731

On February 22, 2000, the committee held a public hearing on Assembly Bill 731 relating to child abuse and neglect prevention and making appropriations. Mr. John Grace from the Wisconsin Association of Family & Children's Agencies testified in favor of the bill. Following his testimony, he was asked to clarify the statement that there had been no second births to unwed teen mothers.

During the committee's executive action on AB 731 last Thursday, this issue was brought up again. At that time, Mr. Grace had not responded to the committee. Upon following up with Mr. Grace for his response, he supplied the attached letter. I hope this helps to clarify any questions or concerns by committee members.

Encl.

131 W. Wilson Street
Suite 901
Madison, WI 53703

(608) 257-5939
FAX (608) 257-6067

John R. Grace
Executive Director
March 3, 2000

Bonnie Ladwig, Chair
Assembly Children and Families Committee
PO Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708-8952

Dear Representative Ladwig:

I recently testified at a Child and Families Committee hearing on AB731. My comments focused on the health related outcomes achieved by the home visiting program to prevent child abuse and neglect that have been achieved by the Healthy Families LaCrosse Program. These outcomes are as follows:

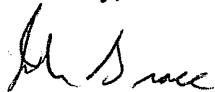
- All babies stay up-to-date with immunizations. In contrast, only 65 % of 2-year-olds in LaCrosse County are immunized.
- 97 % of the families do not have a substantiated child abuse report.
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- Families' use of emergency rooms for infant medical care is reduced as they learn to utilize walk-in clinics and keep regular appointments.
- Developmental delays in infants are detected early and referrals are made.
- There are no second births to unwed teen mothers.

Following my testimony, I was asked to clarify the statement that there had been no second births to unwed teen mothers. The concern expressed by some committee members was that there may have been pregnancies that had been terminated in order to avoid second births.

After discussing this question with the program administrators, I would like to assure your committee that this concern is unwarranted. **In fact, since the beginning of the Healthy Families Program in 1993, with over 350 families participating, there have been no unplanned pregnancies by unwed teen mothers while these families were being served by the program, which ranges from one to four years.** This remarkable outcome is due, in large part, to the program's emphasis on helping teen mothers consider more positive behaviors and choices for a better future for themselves and their babies.

I hope this is helpful. Please let me know if I can provide additional information.

Sincerely,



John R. Grace
Executive Director

131 W. Wilson Street
Suite 901
Madison, WI 53703

(608) 257-5939
FAX (608) 257-6067

John R. Grace
Executive Director

March 3, 2000

Bonnie Ladwig, Chair
Assembly Children and Families Committee
PO Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708-8952

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Sincerely,



John R. Grace
Executive Director