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(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ... PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

1997-98

(session year)

Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on Education...

## COMMITTEE NOTICES ...

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## INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

- Appointments ... **Appt** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
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- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
  - (**ab** = Assembly Bill)                      (**ar** = Assembly Resolution)                      (**ajr** = Assembly Joint Resolution)
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- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**

\* Contents organized for archiving by: Stefanie Rose (LRB) (December 2012)

Wed. 1/28/98

Mr. Chairman, distinguished committee members and fellow citizens: I am Dr. Philip Blank, 5½ years retired from the Milwaukee Area Technical College. My terminal degree is in vocational-technical education, and besides knowing something about the field in the U.S., I also studied the field during my Fulbrights in Turkey and Germany. As a part of my doctoral work at Michigan State, I did a comprehensive study of vocational-technical education in Japan.

The Wisconsin system predates the Smith-Hughes Act, and was begun during the progressive era when our great state pioneered workmens compensation as well as other citizen-oriented legislation. Vocational education is still the best means of meeting the needs of business and industry, government, society and the individual. In fact, these things are so interconnected that I cannot understand why we have taken such a great step backward by not allowing W-2 workers the opportunity to move out of poverty-level jobs by enabling them to have education as a part of the formula for their work requirement. Having alternated between the world of work and the ivory tower during most of my adult life, I can testify that education IS work! I lament the fact that it is no longer possible for students to make money for tuition by working in summer factory jobs like I <sup>did</sup> ~~was able~~ ~~to do~~. I am here because I appreciate the fact that I had further education while on military active duty, and then had the GI bill, took advantage of funding for further education through the National Science Foundation, an NDEA Institute and a federally funded fellowship for my doctorate. I do not anticipate that everyone can be as fortunate as I, but EVERYONE should have the opportunity to be educated to work at a level where they can have family supporting jobs and the accompanying dignity. I was able to advance from my lower-middle class childhood to my comfortable retirement, and I assert that everyone should have access to the opportunities that I had. In my twilight <sup>work</sup> ~~years of work~~ I testified at a hearing in the

Education and W-2, sheet 2      Blank

Milwaukee State Office Building, and brought out the fact about the gender inequity of enabling a poor young woman who produced evidence of being ~~f~~ fertile to attend school while the father was ignored. I was not questioning the right of the young, especially impoverished minorities to have access to education; I was, rather, pointing out the inconsistency of the system then in place. Unless the W-2 law is changed we are going to have a permanent underclass; one that might also be ethnically unbalanced. And that, along with the disappearing middle class and inordinately increasing wealth of the rich will foment a civil strife that is totally inappropriate for a truly democratic society.

In none of the countries that I visited and studied have I seen such an adverse situation for the underclass. (Since my retirement, I have participated in People-to-People International where I visited China, Australia and New Zealand). -- I admit that in China, I did not get to see the prisons with the forced labor, but I'm sure that my Chinese counterparts visiting Wisconsin would be startled when they would see Wisconsin ~~prisoners~~ prisoners making gloves, while the former, law-abiding glove workers were unemployed.

Are we to give credence to the assertions of radicals that American capitalism requires not only an underclass but X % unemployment? -- As a vocational educator who knows the value of continuing education, I implore you to enable W-2 workers who lack the appropriate education the opportunity to get it as an integral part of their employment credit.

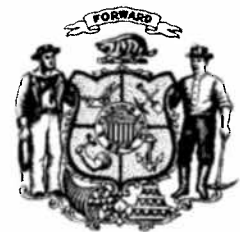
Mr Philip Blank  
4545 W Spencer Pl  
Milwaukee WI  
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(414) 873-6359



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



## TESTIMONY ON SB 376

### TECHNICAL COLLEGE FOR CERTAIN WISCONSIN WORKS PARTICIPANTS

January 28, 1998

Good morning, Chairperson Potter and committee members. I am Donna Cochems, from the Division of Economic Support, Department of Workforce Development. With me today is Conor Smyth, Policy Analyst with the Employment Transition Team in the Division of Economic Support.

The Department is testifying in opposition to Senate Bill 376, relating to technical college for certain Wisconsin Works (W-2) participants. The effect of this proposal would be to shift the emphasis of the W-2 program away from immediate attachment to the workforce.

Past experience with the JOBS program in Wisconsin clearly shows that the best possible training is job skills, or on-the-job, training. JOBS Annual Reports for 1993 and 1994, the most current available, demonstrate that the most successful JOBS components were those involving job skills training, with completion rates as high as 69.5 percent in 1994. The importance of workforce attachment is also evident nationally. A December 1997 statement by the National Center for Policy Analysis (NCPA) pointed out that states showing little success in welfare reform have failed to emphasize going to work immediately.

Again looking to our experience with the JOBS program, the failure to complete rate was extremely high for components involving education, which also were the longest in duration.

In addition, it must be considered that from January 1987 to December 1996 the cash assistance caseload in Wisconsin dropped 54 percent, and more than 58 percent from December 1996 to December 1997. These decreases have meant a considerable change in the characteristics of those who remain, as those most able to go to work have done so. Of the more than 10,000 Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) cases that have been converted to W-2 statewide, significantly more than half do not possess a high school diploma. Post secondary education is not the most effective means to self-sufficiency for the majority of current W-2 participants, who have more severe barriers to employment than did past participants.

Currently under W-2, participants may spend between 10 and 12 hours per week in additional education and training activities. This is sufficient to accommodate the more successful short-term training needed most by current participants, such as GED programs, basic skills training and literacy training. At the same time, they are spending the majority of their time in valuable work training experience that most often leads to workforce attachment. Finally, in order to accommodate intensive, short-term training courses which may require more than 10 or 12 hours per week, participants may aggregate the total education and training hours allotted during a six-month W-2 employment position.

For those individuals who desire to pursue self-initiated education and training opportunities, the Employment Skills Advancement Program (ESAP) is an important part of W-2 and a valuable source of financial aid. After demonstrating an attachment to the workforce, participants may receive a matching grant of up to \$500 to be used toward direct costs of education and training (for example tuition, books, equipment, tools or clothing). This allows for the pursuit of further education in addition to work, not instead of it.

By contrast, this proposal would significantly expand hours spent in educational activities while diminishing the connection to the working world. The results would quite likely mirror the failure of past programs that have focused on long-term education instead of work, and have kept participants trapped in poverty.

Due to the 60-month lifetime eligibility limit imposed by the federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program, time is a luxury no longer afforded W-2 participants. Time limits necessitate a speedier transition to the workforce. This is not a proposal that would serve participants well.

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.



**Testimony for Wisconsin State Joint Committee on Finance**

*Chamber*

**Wednesday, January 28, 1998 – 10 a.m.**

**119 Martin Luther King Blvd., Madison, Wisconsin**

**By: Mary L. Cuene, Instructor of Business and Marketing**

**Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, Green Bay, Wisconsin**

As an Instructor at NWTC in Green Bay for the last ten years, it has been my privilege to work with many fine students. My specialty is teaching "soft skills" in the Office Systems Department, and I meet dozens of newly enrolled adults every semester. While we, as faculty, are not informed of a student's financial status, I have been fortunate enough to become closely acquainted with most of my students and learn of their personal circumstances. Please keep in mind that when I use the word "students," I am speaking of (for the most part) women ranging in age from 18 to 70, with the average campus age being 30. Of these students, there are many amazing stories of women who have achieved great success under extreme duress; and they could not have reached these heights without financial assistance. Let me read to you the letter of just one: (attached). Another former NWTC student, Julie Pries, is here to testify as well.

Julie and Cheryl represent the six to seven hundred persons who had attended NWTC in an average year as AFDC recipients. Their stories represent those of our graduates who came to learn a skill and have succeeded in becoming self-sufficient, tax paying citizens. Could they have reached this status without training? No. The availability of education made possible through the JOBS program, before W2, enabled them to become financially free. Today, that option would not be available to them.



I myself returned to college after my children were born. Without my education, I would not be here talking with you today. Education is the key in today's society, and that will not change. The Wisconsin Technical College System proudly boasts of over 90 percent of its graduates being hired into jobs in their field of study. And, as in the NWTC District, most of these graduates stay in their hometown, working to build the tax base and a stronger community.

Allowing W2 recipients to go full-time to a Technical College for two years just makes sense. A strong and educated workforce is the backbone of any economy. That is why our state is prospering today. Wisconsin has a long-standing tradition of supporting its residents. Our Technical College System has and is prepared to continue training people for today's job. Granting W2 recipients the opportunity to better themselves is the right thing to do.

Thank you for your time.

Cheryl Klarkowski  
314 S. Quincy St.  
Green Bay, WI 54301

January 19, 1998

To the Wisconsin Legislature:

I am writing on behalf of increased educational benefits being included in the W-2 program. After being a housewife and mother for seventeen years, a divorce forced me to seek help from the state.

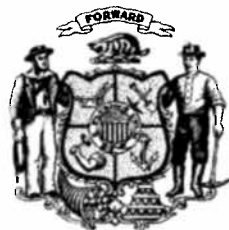
I was a single mother with three child and no career to support my family. I knew I would not be able to rejoin the workforce at more than minimum wage without updating my education. Without the funding available at the time I would not have been able to go back to school. I enrolled in a two year program at the technical college and was able to upgrade my skills and learned a profession that enabled me to get back into the workforce. I am now employed at a medical clinic, at a good wage, with benefits that allow me to provide for my family.

I am very proud of what I was able to accomplish. The self-satisfaction of getting off of AFDC was worth the effort. Being in school again showed my children that continuing their education would always benefit them. I was fortunate to be able to set that kind of example to my family. It would only benefit others to have the resources available to them to be able to do the same.

Thank you for your time,



Cheryl Klarkowski





Wisconsin Indianhead  
**TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

▼ *Administrative Office*

**Jan Jenson**

Director, Resource Development

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Shell Lake, WI 54871  
715-468-2815 ext. 2239 • Fax: 715-468-2819  
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## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 376

January 28, 1998 Madison, Wisconsin

Presented by: **Jan K Jenson, Director, Resource Development on behalf of  
David R. Hildebrand, President, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College**

Good morning. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today on behalf of our President, David Hildebrand. He regrets that he is unable to be here today due to a prior commitment. While my comments today reflect our technical college's perspective, they are also based upon our extensive involvement with local W-2 Steering Committees and Local Collaborative Planning Teams.

### Description of District

- WITC encompasses 20% of the state, 10,900 square miles, 11 northwest counties.
- 94% of our 1996 graduates who are in the labor force are employed at an average annual salary of \$19,992. Many exceeded \$33,600. We are especially proud of this in view of the fact that...
- Overall, per capita income rates fall 22% below the state average; 27% below the national average.
- Welfare dependence has been a way of life for a number of our constituents.
- With the advent of W-2, WITC has experienced a 46% decrease in number of welfare recipient program students within the past year.

### Our Philosophy

While we do support the basic philosophy and work ethic of W-2, we also firmly believe that education is the critical link to long-term success within the workplace. Our students - and potential students - deserve an opportunity to obtain meaningful employment and self-sufficiency, more than a minimum wage dead-end job.

### Our Students Speak

To bring home the reality of W-2's impact, I'd like to share with you the story of one of our students. Her name is Cheryl, a 34 year old mother of 5 who recently left a violent ex-husband. With very limited experience, a back injury, 5 children to support on her own and still reeling from the trauma of her abusive marriage, she was still motivated to get the education she needed to support her family. She wanted to enroll in WITC's Administrative Assistant program but needed welfare assistance to do so. She was told she had to take a minimum wage job instead - which she did. Cheryl did find a way, on her own, to obtain financial aid to enroll in this program. In fact, she got straight A's last semester! She has, however, had to take on a second job to make ends meet. She struggles trying to balance a full-time technical college program with two jobs and five kids. She wonders how much longer she can go on without dropping out of school and destroying her chance to pursue the American dream for her children.

Cheryl wants you to know that if only she had had an option to attend technical college under the provisions of SB 376, it would have made a tremendous difference in her life. "For those of us who are motivated to learn", she says, "I think we deserve a chance so we can support our own children."

### Concerns Related to W-2

Cheryl and other current technical college students represent the tip of the iceberg. We have no way of knowing how many people are trapped out there in dead-end, minimum wage jobs without access to the education and training they need. The realities are that:

- People working 2 or more jobs to make ends meet do not have the time to go to school. This is especially true for the Community Service Job and Transitional categories targeted by this bill.
- The Employment Skills Advancement Program is not the answer. Match provisions are difficult to meet, and
- The critical unmet need is time up front for training so people have real options beyond working multiple minimum wage jobs.

### Impact of SB 376

Passage of this bill would enhance the long-term success of targeted W-2 participants who are most in need. They could focus on a full-time program with a reduced work component. Technical colleges could provide a comprehensive array of services designed to meet their needs, including:

- Career assessment to ensure proper "fit"
- Technical education in skills needed to succeed in today's job market
- Basic skills/ESL
- "Soft" employability skills including interpersonal skills, teamwork, etc. (a critical need identified by employers)
- Community Service Job slots on campus
- Most importantly, exposure/orientation to the concept of lifelong learning, the key to job retention and advancement in today's rapidly changing world.

A number of our local W-2 agencies also support this bill. Becky O'Brien of Burnett County commented, "This option could make it easier for this population to meet W-2 requirements." According to Terry Perry, Ashland County W-2, "It would be great. It would help them to break the cycle of welfare dependence."

Dick Best, Executive Director of the West Central Private Industry Council/Workforce Development Board, has also expressed his full support of this initiative and any efforts that would allow greater flexibility for W-2 participants to obtain training.

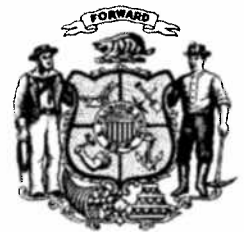
In Conclusion, Welfare-to-Work is NOT enough! Yes, people are going to work - in record numbers. But...are they becoming self-sufficient? Has it made a difference in quality of life? Is it meeting the needs of our employers? Is it possible that we are not even asking the right questions yet??

If we are going to have any long-range impact in making W-2 work for the people, for the State of Wisconsin, we need more than a quick fix. We need to build in more long-term mechanisms for success - like SB 376. In fact, we would recommend expanding educational options to benefit ALL welfare recipients.

On behalf of our President, David Hildebrand, I would like to commend the sponsors of this bill for their understanding and long-range vision. We are willing to work with you, any way that we can to support SB 376 and other quality vocational education opportunities for ALL W-2 participants.



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





"For these are all our children . . .  
we will all profit by, or pay for,  
whatever they become." James Baldwin

Testimony before the Senate Education Committee  
On 1997 SB 376: Technical College for Certain Wisconsin Works Participants

By Carol W. Medaris, Project Attorney  
January 28, 1997

1997 Senate Bill 376 would increase opportunities for participants in Wisconsin Works (W-2) to go to technical college in partial satisfaction of their work requirements. Currently post-secondary students may count only 10 to 12 hours per week of schooling to satisfy their W-2 requirements. This leaves 28 to 30 hours of other work activities which they must satisfy in order to qualify for W-2 benefits. The Bill would allow participants to go to school for up to 25 to 27 hours per week. The W-2 agency could then assign other work activities to bring total weekly hours up to 40.

Under the bill, only hours spent in class and time spent travelling to and from class would count as school hours. In many cases school hours will not total more than 20 hours per week, leaving W-2 agencies the option of assigning a half-time job in addition to school attendance. As a practical matter, this change would allow students to go to school full time, which is generally not possible under the current 10 to 12 hour limits. They could still be required to participate in a substantial amount of actual work activities.

In order for the student's educational activities to count, he or she would have to be in a program which the W-2 agency determined likely to lead to employment. In addition, the student would have to maintain full-time status, regularly attend classes, and maintain at least a 2.0 grade point average.

In order to count in satisfaction of federal work participation requirements, the post-secondary schooling would be limited to one year. However, since overall the state is obligated to satisfy work participation requirement for only 50% of its single parent caseload (and that not until the year 2002) there is the flexibility to allow some students to pursue two-year programs if appropriate and if they continue to satisfy statutory requirements (full-time status, regular attendance, and a 2.0 GPA in a program likely to lead to employment).

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Finally, the bill's provisions would apply only to those who were able to fund their educational program with outside grants and loans. There is no provision in the bill for any W-2 funds to pay educational expenses.

Why is it important to provide an opportunity for some W-2 participants to go to school full-time? First, as a practical matter, school loans and grants often depend upon full-time attendance. By limiting the hours as is the case under current law, the opportunity for financial help to attend school is greatly diminished.

But more important is the fact that with increased education comes greater potential for achieving family self-sufficiency. Many studies have correlated increased family income with increases in educational attainment. For a recent study see "Family Income by Educational Attainment 1959 to 1996," Vol. No. 64, Postsecondary Education Opportunity, October 1997.<sup>1</sup> When these statistics are considered beside the relatively poor wages earned by recent welfare recipients and the frequency with which workers with the lowest wages return to welfare,<sup>2</sup> the argument for at least allowing technical school education for those motivated to pursue it is compelling.

The study noted above shows that with each increment in educational achievement, family income increases. A companion study in the same issue shows that as family income increases, the chance for college among 18 and 24 year old dependent family members increases as well. "High School Graduation, College Continuation and Chance for College by Family Income."<sup>3</sup>

This means that as we facilitate higher earnings through additional training for welfare recipients, we court higher educational achievement and earnings for their children, as well.

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<sup>1</sup> The study is based upon census figures collected by the federal Census Bureau in its March 1997 Current Population Survey.

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. recent study by John Pawasarat, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute, "Employment and Earnings of Milwaukee County Single Parent AFDC families: Establishing Benchmarks for Measuring Employment Outcomes Under "W-2."

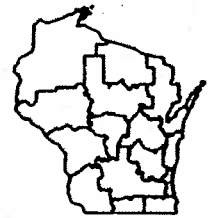
<sup>3</sup> The data used in this report is from information collected by the federal Census Bureau in its October 1995 Current Population Survey.





# WISCONSIN STUDENT GOVERNMENT

OF THE TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM



January 28, 1998

Dear Senate Education Committee:

Re: SB376

Thank you for sharing your time by holding this public hearing on SB376. I am a student currently taking 15 credits in the Microcomputer Specialists program at Milwaukee Area Technical College West Campus. I am also a W2 participant, a single mother of four children ages five through nine. As Student Senate President, I represent over 7,000 students presently enrolled at the West Campus. I am also President of the Wisconsin Student Government, representing over 440,000 students in our technical colleges across the state.

We do believe that everyone on the W2 program ought to work. WHY? For every reason the W2 was put in action. We do not believe they should be forced to go to work with no educational background; keeping their families in low to poverty level incomes. WHY? Post secondary education can give an individual the skills necessary to become financially free from any form of state aid. If 80% of future jobs in Wisconsin will require post secondary education, it is our feeling the WTCS is the delivery system to the transition to family supporting wages. 94% of WTCS graduates find employment within six months of graduation. The median training related wage is approximately \$1,600 per month. This translates into positive tax income for our state. We are your best investment.

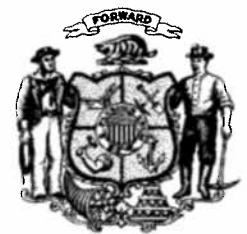
We highly encourage the Wisconsin State Legislature to consider SB376 as the means for W2 participants to become financially free. We also encourage the Wisconsin State Legislature to consider any educational and child care matter in future legislation pertaining to W2.

Sincerely,

Laura Roberts  
MATC West Student Senate President  
Wisconsin Student Government President  
W2 Participant - Mother of Four Children



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Prepared for W-2 Hearing on January 28th, 1998  
By Eldor "Bud" Teske

I am a resident of the Village of North Prairie and employed for the past 27 years at Waukesha County Technical College as an Auto Body instructor.

I would like first to respond to some criticism I have heard that is, that the faculty and administrators of the WTC system are promoting this bill because of self serving interests, ie. more students for the college.

At WCTC there are more than 35 thousand students who attend as either full time or part time students. Whether we, at WCTC, have 500 or 1000 more or fewer students will have no effect on WCTC. There will be no more or fewer classes offered. There will be no layoffs of faculty or administrators nor new hires because of the loss or addition of these students. No effect.

This same thing, no effect, cannot be said for the people in the community service and transitional placement aspects of the W-2 program. This is a loss of an opportunity for them to be able to attend our system and learn new skills. This will make a difference and have an effect on their lives.

The WTC system has a proven track record for training people to survive and excel in the real world of work. We intake everybody, rejects and graduates from the K-12 and the UW system. No matter what level they are on when people start in the WTC system, we take them from where they are at and teach them saleable skills to become successful and productive workers.

We, all of us, have a moral obligation to help the less fortunate around us. W-2 has the potential to help people break out of the welfare cycle. As it stands for the people in community service and transitional placement, it's cruel and mean spirited.

These people are not average citizens. They don't have the same advantages as our children and families do. These people don't have high self esteem or a healthy self image. These people need extra help, encouragement and opportunities to climb out of their lot and enter into the world of work as productive self supporting citizens of the State of Wisconsin.

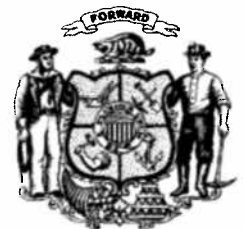
Without training, to gain new skills that will qualify them to get jobs that pay enough to support themselves, these people and the W-2 system are destined for failure.

I urge you to make every effort to help get this bill passed for their sake.

Bud Teske  
P.O. Box 107  
North Prairie WI 53153



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





January 28, 1998

TESTIMONY: Wisconsin Senate Education Committee

FROM: Denise A. Wenger, Ph.D.,  
Director, Instructional Materials Depot, Inc.  
2323 S. 109th Street, Suite 350 414-329-9623  
West Allis, WI 53227 RE: Support for Senate Bill 383

Senators:

During the weeks since you last heard testimony on the Wisconsin Charter School Law, members of the Wisconsin Charter School Association, parents, and educators from across Wisconsin have continued planning for future charter schools. Several planning groups have submitted Charter School Planning or Implementation Grant requests to the Department of Public Instruction. Their hopes for reforming education in Wisconsin through provisions of the Charter School law hang in the balance. Unless provisions of SB 383 are enacted, many will not be able to move forward in their plans.

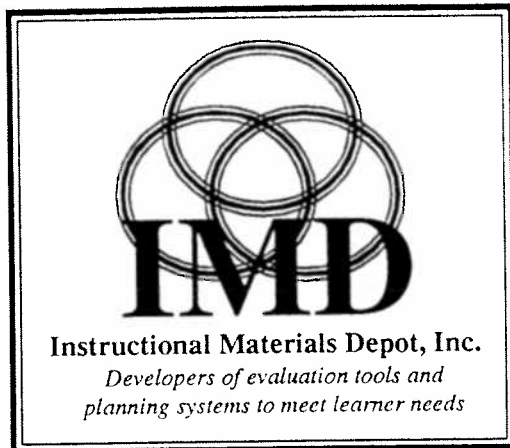
The current Charter School law in Wisconsin has not provided residents and educators with the provisions of law that they need to build charter schools that can solve education problems they seek to solve. I am an experienced teacher trainer and developer of curriculum planning tools for school districts. Like others who are working to improve school opportunities for students in Wisconsin, I see several provisions of SB 383 as essential to the future of charter schools in Wisconsin. I have served as an advisor to several planning groups, and I know they agree with me on the need for these two changes and provisions of SB 383:

First, repeal of the requirement that a charter school must be an instrumentality of the school district, and that the district must employ all personnel for the charter school is essential. These provisions will expand organizational options for charter schools and enable planners to seek out the teachers they need to staff charter schools. In their June, 1997 report: "Charter Schools As Seen by Those Who Know Them Best: Students, Teachers, and Parents," researchers from the Hudson Institute (Washington, D.C.) reported: "The average charter school teacher comes in with 5.6 years of public-school teaching experience, 1.7 years of private-school teaching experience, 1.4 years of experience teaching in a university of elsewhere . . . and almost three-quarters (72%) of charter school teachers are certified, while 17% are working on it." Charter schools can offer new opportunities to trained teachers in Wisconsin . . . if these changes are enacted.

Second, charter schools should not give preference to any group who they serve. The repeal of provisions of the current law which give preference to serving "at risk" students opens the charter school opportunity to all students in Wisconsin. It has another effect. It makes high academic standards a driving force in planning. Educators have seen the effects of enrollment-driven funding policies at the national level, where Title I funding has become a source of school revenue. Currently, investigations into the classifying of students into Title I programs are underway. Like Title I, the current provision of Wisconsin's charter school law which gives preference to "at risk" programs sends the wrong message. Charter school planners seek to raise the performance standards for all students . . . to make high academic standards not "at risk" preferences the driving force for planning and chartering new schools in Wisconsin.

On January 26, 1998, I sent you a FAX regarding SB 383. As a charter school planner, I see the provisions of this bill which I spoke of in that communication and the provisions which I addressed today as critical improvements for Wisconsin's charter school law. The reforms that will be enabled by this bill are reforms that speak to needs that exist within the heart of Wisconsin. They affect real people who are in touch with real problems and who see charter schools as real solutions. I ask for your support of SB 383 because it opens doors of opportunity in Wisconsin. I ask for your vote for SB 383 because it sends a message of hope to people who care about our children and seek to take action to improve their educational future in Wisconsin. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Denise A. Wenger, Ph.D.  
414-329-9623 FAX: 414-329-9624



January 26, 1998

TO: Members of the Wisconsin  
Senate Education Committee

FROM: Denise A. Wenger, Ph.D.,  
Director, Instructional Materials Depot, Inc.  
2323 S. 109th Street, Suite 350  
West Allis, WI 53227

RE: Support for SB 383/AB 631,  
which expands the public charter school  
program in Wisconsin.

Dear Members of the Education Committee,

I am unable to appear before you on January 28th because of business commitments. I am a teacher trainer and developer of curriculum planning tools for school districts. I also am involved with planning a charter school which will serve students who are enrolled in non-traditional school programs in Wisconsin. I would like to present three practical reasons why I encourage you to support SB 383/AB 631.

First, this bill expands the public charter school law in ways that the Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) and the Wisconsin Charter School Association (WCSA) can support. On January 28th, representatives from these forward thinking educational organizations will testify in support of changes to the charter school law that will expand contracting authority to CESAs, extend conversion opportunities to private nonsectarian schools outside Milwaukee, expand organizational and structural options for charter schools, and allow communities latitude in types of charters they establish. These are practical changes which administrators, educators and parents who are involved with Wisconsin's schools support and need in order to build new charter schools to serve educational needs of Wisconsin's children. It is important for the Senate to join the WASB and WCSA in supporting these provisions.

Second, this bill expands organizational and structural options for charter schools. It allows a school board to contract with a partnership, cooperative, individual, association or corporate entity to operate a charter school. Organizational structures can get in the way of building a new school. By expanding options for operators, SB 383/AB 631 gives planners of charter schools the freedom to develop organizational structures to fit their school's needs. It is conceivable that in Wisconsin, this provision of law could result in the development of a variety of new school structures, including a Montessori-based charter public school operated by a cooperative and an Internet-based cyberschool operated by public-private partnerships. It is important for you to support this provision of SB 383/AB 631. By expanding organizational and structural options, you enable economy in structural design of new charter schools.

Third, SB 383/AB 631 repeals the current law's requirement that a charter school must be an instrumentality of the school district and the school board shall employ all personnel for the charter school. These changes open the door for use of talents and learning experiences that fit learner needs instead of system needs. These changes get to the heart of how charter schools are changing school operations . . . freeing schools from the bonds that bind them to and within old systems. The primary focus of a public school should be to educate youth, not to serve as a job security program for school district personnel. This provision of SB 383/AB 631 provides charter public schools with the freedom to employ personnel based on learner and school needs. I applaud this provision of SB 383/AB 631. It allows charter schools to keep their focus on learner needs and to hire accordingly. I encourage you to support this and all other provisions of SB 383/AB 631.

Thank you for the opportunity to present these views.. I do appreciate your many efforts in behalf of education for Wisconsin's children. Your responsiveness to the practical needs of parents and educators who are seeking to forge new charter public schools to satisfy education needs which are not being filled by established schools is recognized throughout Wisconsin and is greatly appreciated.

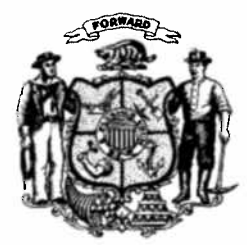
Sincerely, Denise A. Wenger, Ph.D.

END OF FAX





# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Suzanne Zipperer  
3480 N. Pierce St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53212

January 28, 1998

To Wisconsin State Senate Education Committee

A recent study undertaken by the UWM Employment and Training Institute shows us what is really happening to families which leave the welfare rolls. (It is a pity that the public had to rely on a charitable foundation to fund such a study, since one would assume that responsible legislators would require tracking of these families in exchange for the \$10 million in additional tax dollars W-2 is costing.)

As those of us who know people on welfare suspected, the majority did not get the "hand up" out of poverty promised by W-2. In fact, only one out of six families that left welfare earned more than poverty level wages. The study showed that exactly 16.2% of 25,125 families earned above the poverty line, 38.4% worked full time at minimum wage jobs, and 34.3% showed no earnings whatsoever.

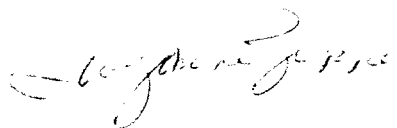
What does this mean to me, as a taxpayer who lives in Senator Gwen Moore's district of Milwaukee? It means, precisely, that the families moving off welfare are not the families which will be buying homes in Milwaukee and keeping my property values up and taxes down. It means they are not the families which will be able to support the businesses on Capitol Drive near my home so that they stay in business and I don't have to drive across town to do my shopping. It means that I have to worry more about children, who have grown up in the midst of American consumerism, committing crimes in my neighborhood to get the things their parents can't buy for them. It means that there are still many, many families who burden the tax system and are not tax payers because they are still eligible for poverty assistance programs, even though they are working full time!

When I became a single parent at the age of 33, I realized one thing: that I needed to earn more money in order to support my child. I had worked since I was 16. I had never been fired from a job and had excellent references. But without a college degree, my earnings would be limited. So I did what many single mothers would like to do; I went back to school to finish the degree I had not completed the first time I started college. Within a year and a half, I had earned my degree. Within three years, I had begun to earn enough to support my family. I am now also a taxpayer and home owner.

High skills = high wages has been the mantra of the '90s and will continue to be so in the next century. We are closing the door to thousands of WOMEN (and yes, this is a women's issue) who could benefit from education if we do not pass this bill to change W-2 and allow an educational component.

Please support families and Senate Bill 391.

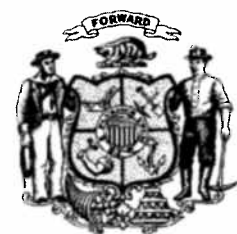
Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Suzanne Zipperer".

Suzanne Zipperer



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Education has been the key factor in helping me become self supportive. I had spent 16 years on State welfare, and 23 years on County ( for any one counting that was 39 years on the system) up until 1995. Having had seven children, and being a single parent, I have always tried to support my own. The only jobs I was qualified for with a high school diploma was restaurant work as a front line cook and waitress. Throughout the 39 years I was employed, often 2-3 jobs at a time at minimum wage. The money was never good enough to take care of my family's needs, so therefore I was always eligible for government benefits.

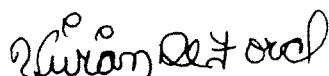
My main goal had always been to go to college, but the words "not mandatory" always came up when I discussed education with my social workers. So after 20 years of having the type of employment I was qualified for with no health insurance, no retirement fund, no job security, I decided I definitely wanted more in my future than I had in my past. The decision to go back to school was enormous because it had been 25 years since I had earned my high school diploma.

With the help of a Department of Human Services Worker and a DVR agent, I applied at Chippewa Valley Technical College in Eau Claire, WI and was accepted in September, 1993. When I had one year left in my program, Human Services told me that after one more semester I would have to seek employment. I had a semester left and foresaw no diploma that I worked hard to achieve. It happened that I had applied for SSI because of multiple disabilities and at the same time I was told I would have to seek employment I was found eligible for SSI.

In December of 1996 I received my Associate Degree in Marketing from CVTC. Since then I have been a Special Needs Assistant at CVTC, a position I created. I have received no AFDC and no cash payment from SSI since graduation. Without the college degree none of my dreams would be coming true. Education was never designed only for the rich, and with W-2 lower income people don't have a lot of hope of furthering their education. People are going to wind up working at places like those that I worked at where I had no hope of advancement. W-2 as it now stands is not going to turn out self sufficient and productive people. Education has got to be a part of W-2 or we are starting a new chain of problems in that our children will follow in our footsteps on a path of low paying dead end jobs.

I am proof of what education can do. I was given a chance, and I became successful. Education enabled me to get off the system and it will keep me off it. I want to see education implemented into W-2 and give those a chance for success that I was given. There are thousands trapped in the cycle of poverty and dependence who could break out of the cycle if they had the opportunity that education offers.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my views.



Vivian De Ford  
403 Vine Street  
Eau Claire, WI 54703

Home - 715/ 830-0980  
Work - 715/ 833-6254



**Good Morning.**

**My name is Michael Grover and I am a researcher at the Institute for Wisconsin's Future, or IWF, which is a state public policy research and education center located in Milwaukee.**

**The research findings I would like to discuss today focus on two important topics with regard to Senate Bill 376 -- They are JOB ACCESS and WAGE LEVELS as they relate to current W-2 participants.**

**I would like to begin with some findings on JOB ACCESS:**

- In 1995, IWF found that there were less than half of the jobs necessary to employ the total number of AFDC recipients and unemployed persons in the state.<sup>1</sup>
- These findings were supported by a recent study completed by Northern Illinois University and the Chicago Urban League, called *Work After Welfare*. The study concluded that for every 3 job seekers only 1 entry level, low-skill job existed in Wisconsin.<sup>2</sup>
- While the job gap may be minimal in a few parts of the state, it is a major problem in Southeastern Wisconsin. In Kenosha County, there are four to five job seekers for every entry level, low-skill job.<sup>3</sup>

**When one considers the WAGE LEVELS paid for entry level, low-skill jobs the problem of JOB ACCESS is magnified.**

- The *Work After Welfare* study revealed that only 17% of all entry level, low-skill jobs in Wisconsin paid wages above the poverty line. Only 4% of these jobs paid a livable wage.<sup>4</sup>

- A study of former AFDC recipients by UW-Milwaukee's Employment and Training Institute confirms this trend. Only 1 out of 6 families that left welfare in Milwaukee County earned more than poverty wages in 1997.<sup>5</sup>
- The prospects of low skill workers earning an adequate wage are grim. In Metropolitan Milwaukee, at least 55 job seekers will compete for every entry level, low-skill job that pays a livable wage. In the northwest portion of the state, at least 59 job seekers will compete for every entry level, low-skill job that pays a livable wage.<sup>6</sup>

**These studies consistently point to the need for better education and training in order to bridge the gap between available jobs and adequate wages for women on W-2.**

- In Illinois, a study concluded that policies there that encouraged job training for welfare recipients greatly expanded the number of jobs open to them by over 60 percent and cut the size of the job gap by about 19 percent.<sup>7</sup>
- A recent IWF working study reached the same conclusion about our state. Of the fifteen fastest growing occupations projected to the year 2005 all but four required a post-secondary education and significant work experience. Those that do not, pay wages barely above poverty on average.<sup>8</sup>
- The Employment and Training Institute study also concluded that most jobs paying above poverty were held by individuals with 12 years of schooling or more.<sup>9</sup>

**The findings of these studies strongly demonstrate that the design of W-2 should include a comprehensive training component. This would ensure that recipients have the skills needed to secure and maintain jobs that pay wages adequate to support self-sufficient households.**



### Notes

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<sup>1</sup> *W-2 (Wisconsin Works): An Analysis of Feasibility and Impact*, (Milwaukee: The Institute for Wisconsin's Future, October 1995).

<sup>2</sup> *Work After Welfare: Is Wisconsin's Booming Economy Creating Enough Jobs?*, (De Kalb: Northern Illinois University, 1997).

<sup>3</sup> *Work After Welfare*.

<sup>4</sup> *Work After Welfare*.

<sup>5</sup> *Employment and Earnings of Milwaukee County Single Parent AFDC Families: Establishing Benchmarks for Measuring Employment Outcomes Under W-2*, (Milwaukee: UW-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute, January 1998).

<sup>6</sup> *Work After Welfare*.

<sup>7</sup> *Are There Enough Jobs? Welfare Reform and Labor Market Reality*, (De Kalb: Northern Illinois University, 1995).

<sup>8</sup> *Training and Wage Levels in the Wisconsin Job Market*, IWF Working Paper, (Milwaukee: The Institute for Wisconsin's Future, September 1997).

<sup>9</sup> *Employment and Earnings of Milwaukee County Single Parent AFDC Families*.



## State Senate Bill 376

I am in favor of Senate Bill 376, which would allow W-2 participants to count 15 hours of technical school hours as work hours for W-2.

My name is Pat Patterson, from Milwaukee. I am the Co-Chairperson of the Milwaukee Public Schools Task Force on Exceptional Education and Supportive Services, and the Director of Omotayo Support Group for African American Parents/Care-givers of Children with Disabilities, also a member of the State of Wisconsin Dept. of Public Instruction Council on Exceptional Education, and several other state wide organizations and committees.

Because it takes all of the wisdom and the resources of the entire village to protect, educate and grow our children into productive adults. We all do a better job in our roles in caring for our children if we feel respected and valued in that role. In order to get the best job possible. 15 hours of technical school hours as work hours for W-2, are essential to getting a "Real Job".

that can pay the bills and make families economically stable. We all know that education is the key to the future. The costs of the Technical School Classes, in the long run, will not impose an undue financial burden on the tax payers. It isn't unreasonable to think that the person who finishes technical school, will get a well-paying job, with benefits and not have to rely on the public for support, also be a tax payer. If indeed, we want Welfare Reform to work for the betterment of families, W-2 must reconceptualize its education and work policy, and put into effect a system that allows at least 15 hours a week of technical school classes, to count as work requirements under W-2. This is a path to a "Real Job". A lot has changed since the implementation of the Welfare Reform. Many families are at risk of being homeless and hungry. Are some families at greater risks than others? Yes. Lack of Education, Skills, Childcare, and having a child with a disability. Why? Lack of an education and skills, often leads

to dead end jobs, that do not pay livable wages. Having a child with a disability consists of many barriers; Lack of Childcare, Parents are challenged to fill the roles of nurse, Case manager, teacher, therapist, Advocate, and much more. These parents live in fear. Fear of not being able to meet the special health care needs of their child, and not being able to meet W-2 requirements. Our parents already have skills and with additional education - this could well afford them the opportunity to work in health care facilities and schools.

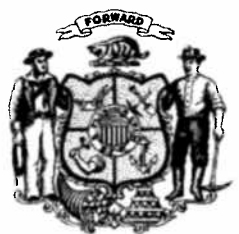
The cost of families living in poverty far exceeds the cost W-2 Participants attending 15 hours per week at a technical school. We strongly believe families can break the chains of poverty by education and "Real Jobs". So please pass Bill 376.

Thank you,

Pat Patterson 414-358-027.  
6463 N. 104<sup>th</sup> St.  
Milwaukee, WI  
53224



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



We, the undersigned students, support the passage of Senate Bill 376, which will allow W-2 participants to attend up to 15 hours per week of vocational college courses as part of their 30 hours per week work requirements.

We urge you to vote in favor of this bill.

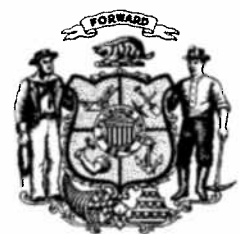
### Names of Students

Learning Center - 2628 N. M.L. King

1. Marilyn H. Johnson
2. M. Johnson
3. Jodi L. Johnson
4. Sherette Young
5. Cedric Anderson
6. Marginder Mally
7. Charles Lemyard
8. Candy Galois
9. GUYEN BOHANNON
10. Wajati Bump
11. Khymy Winkley
12. Jashaki Thompson
13. Luentia Bradley
14. Kenya Hall
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





# NOTICE ! NOTICE! NOTICE! NOTICE!

**\*Senate Education Committee Hearing on SB376  
Wednesday, January 28th, 1998  
10 AM**

**Senate Building- Joint Finance Committee Room  
119 Martin Luther King BLVD  
Madison, WI**

*\* Committee members: Potter, chair; Jauch, vice-chair;  
Shibllski; Gronemus; Schmidt; Darling; Huelsman; Buettner*

Senate Bill 376 will allow W-2 participants to attend up to 15 hours per week of additional college courses as part of their 30 hour per week work requirement. Participants would pay the cost of their education and must complete their course of study within two years. They would also have to meet a mandatory success standard in their classes.

*SB376 introduced by Senators Jauch, Moen and Moore. Cosponsored by Representatives Plouff, Bock, Notestein, Boyle, R. Young, Huber, L. Young, Turner, Gronemus, J. Lehman and Cullen.*

### *Need a Ride ?*

Coach buses will leave MATC Student Center, 7th and State, at 8 AM. All those who will travel on the bus must contact Mike Rosen, 297-7370 to guarantee a seat. This transportation is free to all riders, courtesy of Milwaukee Area Technical College

277 7708