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(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

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

2001-02

(session year)

Assembly

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on ... Children and Families (AC-CF)

COMMITTEE NOTICES ...

- Committee Reports ... **CR**
- Executive Sessions ... **ES**
- Public Hearings ... **PH**

INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

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

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

- Senator Brian Burke, 3rd District
- Laura Leitch, WI Acedemy of Family Physicians
- Liz Buchen, Lutheran Social Services
- Scott Peterson, WI Hospitals
- Marvin Munyon, Family Research Forum/Institute

Registrations against

- None.

March 1, 2001

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Present: (8) Representatives Kestell, Lippert, Bies, Grothman, Jeskewitz, Miller, Coggs and Sinicki.

Absent: (0) None.

Moved by Representative Kestell, seconded by Representative Grothman, that **Assembly Amendment 1 to Assembly Substitute Amendment 1** be recommended for introduction and adoption.

Ayes: (8) Representatives Kestell, Lippert, Bies, Grothman, Jeskewitz, Miller, Coggs and Sinicki.

Noes: (0) None.

Absent: (0) None.

INTRODUCTION AND ADOPTION RECOMMENDED, Ayes 8, Noes 0, Absent 0

Moved by Representative Jeskewitz, seconded by Representative Lippert, that **Assembly Substitute Amendment 1** be recommended for adoption.

Ayes: (8) Representatives Kestell, Lippert, Bies, Grothman, Jeskewitz, Miller, Coggs and Sinicki.

Noes: (0) None.

Absent: (0) None.

INTRODUCTION AND ADOPTION RECOMMENDED, Ayes 8, Noes 0, Absent 0

Moved by Representative Grothman, seconded by Representative Sinicki, that **Assembly Bill 54** be recommended for passage as amended.

Ayes: (8) Representatives Kestell, Lippert, Bies, Grothman, Jeskewitz, Miller, Coggs and Sinicki.

Noes: (0) None.

Absent: (0) None.

PASSAGE AS AMENDED RECOMMENDED, Ayes 8, Noes 0, Absent 0

Dave Matzen
Committee Clerk

Vote Record

Assembly - Committee on Children and Families

Date: 3-1-01 *Grothman*
 Moved by: Rep. ~~Kestell~~ *Sinicki*
 Seconded by: Rep. ~~Kestell~~
 Clearinghouse Rule: _____
 Appointment: _____
 Other: _____

AB: 54 SB: _____
 AJR: _____ SJR: _____
 AR: _____ SR: _____

A/S Amdt: _____
 A/S Amdt: _____ to A/S Amdt: _____
 A/S Sub Amdt: _____
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Be recommended for:

- Passage
- Introduction
- Adoption
- Rejection

- Indefinite Postponement
- Tabling
- Concurrence
- Nonconcurrence
- Confirmation

Committee Member

- Rep. Steve Kestell, Chair
- Rep. MaryAnn Lippert
- Rep. Garey Bies
- Rep. Glenn Grothman
- Rep. Suzanne Jeskewitz
- Rep. Mark Miller
- Rep. G. Spencer Coggs
- Rep. Christine Sinicki

<u>Aye</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Not Voting</u>
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Totals: 8 0 2 _____

Vote Record

Assembly - Committee on Children and Families

Date: 3-1-01
 Moved by: Rep. Kestell Seconded by: Rep. Grothman
 AB: 54 SB: _____ Clearinghouse Rule: _____
 AJR: _____ SJR: _____ Appointment: _____
 AR: _____ SR: _____ Other: _____

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection | <input type="checkbox"/> Nonconcurrence |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation |

Committee Member	Aye	No	Absent	Not Voting
Rep. Steve Kestell, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. MaryAnn Lippert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. Garey Bies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. Glenn Grothman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. Suzanne Jeskewitz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. Mark Miller	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. G. Spencer Coggs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. Christine Sinicki	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Totals:	<u>8</u>	_____	_____	_____

Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Vote Record

Assembly - Committee on Children and Families

Date: 3-1-01
 Moved by: Rep. Jeskewitz Seconded by: Rep. Lippert
 Clearinghouse Rule: _____
 AB: 54 SB: _____ Appointment: _____
 AJR: _____ SJR: _____ Other: _____
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection | <input type="checkbox"/> Nonconcurrency |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation |

<u>Committee Member</u>	<u>Aye</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Not Voting</u>
Rep. Steve Kestell, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. MaryAnn Lippert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Rep. Glenn Grothman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. Suzanne Jeskewitz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. Mark Miller	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. G. Spencer Coggs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. Christine Sinicki	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Totals:	<u>8</u>	_____	_____	_____

Motion Carried Motion Failed

Vote Record

Assembly - Committee on Children and Families

Date: 3-1-01
 Moved by: Rep. Jeskewitz Seconded by: Rep. Lippert
 AB: 54 SB: _____ Clearinghouse Rule: _____
 AJR: _____ SJR: _____ Appointment: _____
 AR: _____ SR: _____ Other: _____

A/S Amdt: _____
 A/S Amdt: _____ to A/S Amdt: _____
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Be recommended for:

- Passage
- Introduction
- Adoption
- Rejection

- Indefinite Postponement
- Tabling
- Concurrence
- Nonconcurrence
- Confirmation

Committee Member

	<u>Aye</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Not Voting</u>
Rep. Steve Kestell, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. MaryAnn Lippert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Rep. Christine Sinicki	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Totals: 8 _____ _____ _____

Motion Carried

Motion Failed



Legislative Briefs

from the Wisconsin
Legislative Reference Bureau

Legislative Brief 01-1

September 2001

“SAFE HARBORS” FOR NEWBORNS

2001 Wisconsin Act 2, passed by the legislature and signed by Governor Scott McCallum on April 3, 2001, allows a parent to anonymously relinquish custody of a newborn child to proper authorities. The act, which took effect April 18, 2001, was enacted in response to newspaper stories that depicted newborn infants abandoned to die in dumpsters, toilets, and other places. It is based, in part, on “Safe Harbor” laws passed in several other states and the recommendations by the Speaker’s Task Force on Abandoned Babies.

RELINQUISHING CUSTODY

Act 2 permits a law enforcement officer, an emergency medical technician, or a hospital staff member to take a newborn child into custody when the parent relinquishes the child to one of these persons and does not express an intent to return. (The act uses the word “parent” without specifying “mother” or “father”.) A parent who is unable to travel in order to deliver a child into custody may call “911” or an emergency medical service provider, and a law enforcement officer or emergency medical technician will be dispatched to take custody of the child. In all cases, the person taking custody must reasonably believe that the child is 72 hours old or younger. The individual taking custody must offer the Wisconsin Maternal and Child Health Hotline number, but the parent has a right to reject the information. The infant must be delivered to a juvenile court intake worker within 24 hours after it is taken into custody. A child taken into custody is eligible for medical assistance.

IMMUNITY

Any parent who relinquishes a child under this act is immune from any civil or criminal liability for any good faith act or omission in connection with that relinquishment. The same immunity is granted to any person who assists the parent. Law enforcement officers, emergency medical technicians, or hospital staff members are immune from any civil liability to the child’s parents or criminal liability for any good faith act or omission occurring solely in the act of taking custody, but their immunity does not extend to the type of care they provide for the child.

JUVENILE COURT ACTION

The act permits a juvenile court to exercise jurisdiction over a newborn child who has been relinquished and is alleged to be in need of protection and services and to grant an involuntary termination of parental rights on the grounds that the child has been relinquished.

Prepared by Richard Roe, Legislative Analyst

ANONYMITY

A parent who relinquishes a newborn child has the right to remain anonymous unless there is a reasonable cause to suspect that the child is a victim of abuse or neglect. Anonymity includes the following provisions: 1) no person may induce or coerce the parent into revealing his or her identity; 2) the parent may leave the presence of the individual taking custody without being followed or pursued; and 3) no officer, employee, or agent of this state or of any of its political subdivisions may attempt to locate or learn the identity of the parent. Any person who assists the parent in relinquishing the child also has the same right to remain anonymous, except when there is cause to believe the child is a victim of abuse or neglect or that the person assisting the parent has coerced the parent into relinquishing custody.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any person who obtains information on the relinquishment of a child may not disclose that information except to the following:

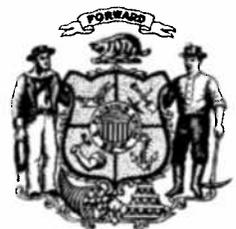
- a birth parent who has waived anonymity or the child's adoptive parent;
- the staff of the Department of Health and Family Services or any county human or social services department or licensed child welfare agency that provides services to the child;
- persons performing juvenile court intake or dispositional services;
- the attending physician;
- the child's foster parent or any other person who has physical custody of the child;
- a juvenile court or an American Indian tribal court that conducts proceedings relating to the child;
- the attorney representing the interests of the public or the tribe in those proceedings; or
- the attorney representing the interests of the child.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A copy of 2001 Wisconsin Act 2 is available at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/2001/data/acts> or by calling the Legislative Reference Bureau at (608) 266-0342. For further information on protecting abandoned babies, contact Mark Mitchell, Department of Health and Family Services at (608) 266-2860.



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Date ??

AO 54 + 488

↳ children & Families Committee



ASSEMBLY BILL 54: SAFE HARBOR FOR NEWBORNS

Background & Summary

Assembly Bill 54, which was introduced by Representative Jeskewitz and Representative Plale at the end of session, 2000 and subsequently reintroduced in January 2001, was prompted by heartbreaking stories of mothers abandoning their babies. We've all heard the stories of desperate mothers feeling they have nowhere else to turn who abandon their newborns in trash bins or backpacks.

The goal of this legislation is to provide an option for desperate mothers and, most importantly, a safe place for that newborn to be abandoned, therefore protecting its life. The mother may surrender her newborn (reasonably believed to be under 72 hours old) to a peace officer, an EMT, a member of a 911 response team or a hospital. The mother is free from prosecution for abandonment. No one may detain or follow the mother or require any information at the time of abandonment. If the baby is discovered to be abused, authorities may search for the mother. If abuse is apparent at the time of abandonment, the mother may be detained. Once the baby is relinquished, normal termination of parental rights (TPR) proceedings are followed, including time for the mother to reclaim her child, placement of the child and notification of the father. The Department of Health and Human Services will promulgate rules necessary for the implementation of this law

Last summer, Speaker Jensen formed a task force consisting of Sue Armacost, Wisconsin Right to Life, Lisa Boyce, Planned Parenthood, Helen Healey, Safe Place for Newborns Dane County, Vince Biscupic, Outagamie County District Attorney, Nancy Korom, Children's Hospital of Wisconsin as well as Representative Plale and Kestell.

History

The legislation that was introduced to the legislature was the final product of input from all over the state. The task force unanimously approved the final legislation. AB 54 was later passed by the Assembly and Senate and signed into law by the Governor as 2001 Act 2.

Republican Message

- At least 25 states have proposed similar legislation across the country, 13 have implemented the legislation.
- In a perfect world, all children would be born to loving, responsible parents. Until we are living in that utopian society, we are giving these newborns the chance to be placed in a loving home.
- This is not intended to solve all of society's problems concerning unwanted pregnancies. This is one solution to a small piece of the puzzle. It protects these newborns from harm.
- There have been cases of babies abandoned in Wisconsin that we know of, the most recent being last month in Eau Claire. There are cases that we know, but we don't know the number of abandoned babies that go unreported.

CHILDREN & FAMILIES



ASSEMBLY BILL 488: SECOND CHANCE HOMES

Background & Summary

Second Chance Homes are homes for pregnant or parenting teenage mothers who are in need of a safe, stable, secure environment. This bill will allow private organizations to start and operate a second chance home. (examples of these groups are the Salvation Army, Lutheran Social Services, etc.)

The legislation will allow these homes to accept girls under the age of 18 by voluntary placement. (The parents, if available, will have to consent for these girls to be in the home). In 1998 there were 7,000 babies born to teen mothers in Wisconsin. Of these mothers, only 1/3rd have graduated from high school by age 19. Wisconsin has a low teen pregnancy rate, but a high subsequent pregnancy rate compared to the rest of the country.

This education and training that will be provided under this bill is intended to promote the mother's long-term economic independence and the well being of the child. We do have second chance homes in Wisconsin, but only for women eighteen or older or for girls younger who have been court ordered. This legislation would allow homes to be set up to serve mothers ages fourteen to eighteen. To be in the home, the mother must be going to school to get her high school diploma or working if she has already earned it (unless there's good cause).

These second chance homes would be for voluntary placement, but would also accept a certain number of court ordered children. A permanency plan must be established for girls in the home. This permanency plan must be prepared within 60 days after the placement of the child. It is required to be reviewed by an outside panel every six months. More key provisions of the bill include:

- Initial voluntary placement may not exceed 180 days, but may be extended with a revised permanency plan. All extensions must be reviewed every 180 days.
- If the child is under 16 at the time of the initial placement, there may be only one extension.
- DHFS will have to promulgate rules concerning what services will be provided by the second chance home and how they may be administered.
- In the rules, the following services must be available: case management services, parenting skills development, independent living skills development, childcare, transportation, health care services.
- The life skills that the girls learn from these homes will help ensure that their children will not live the same life as them.
- Second Chance Homes providers have set up as an association similar to WARS (Wisconsin Association of Runaway Services). This association is

CHILDREN & FAMILIES

WASCH – Wisconsin Association of Second Chance Homes. The association will be a clearinghouse for ideas or money.

- There is *no state funding* attached to this legislation.

History

AB 488 was passed by both the Assembly and Senate. The Governor signed the bill into law on April 11, 2002 as 2001 Act 69.

ASSEMBLY BILL 360: WRONGFUL BIRTH AND WRONGFUL LIFE

Family
Law
com.

Background & Summary

Under current law, if a child is born with a disability that a person (usually a health care provider) could have informed the parents about while there was still time for the child to be aborted, that person may be liable for the costs of caring for that child and for the child's related medical expenses. The person could be liable under current law if he or she negligently failed to inform the parents of the disability or if he or she negligently incorrectly diagnosed the fetus's condition while an abortion was an available option.

Also under current law, if the parents of the child sue for costs resulting from caring for that child, the action is called a wrongful birth action. If the child sues for damages because of being born with a disability, the action is called a wrongful life action. In *Dumer v. St. Michael's Hospital* (S. Ct. Wisconsin 1975), the Wisconsin Supreme Court held that the right to sue for wrongful life is not recognized in Wisconsin. The court stated, however, that the right to sue for wrongful birth is recognized in Wisconsin.

Assembly Bill 360 creates an immunity from liability for a person's act or omission that resulted in the birth of a child because the woman did not undergo an abortion that she would have undergone had the person not committed the act or failed to commit the act.

Under AB 360, "wrongful birth action" means a cause of action that is brought by a parent or other person who is legally required to provide for the support of a child, seeks economic or non-economic damages resulting from a condition of the child that existed at the time of the child's birth, and is based on a claim that a person's act or omission contributed to the mother's decision not to undergo an abortion.

A "wrongful life action," as defined under AB 360, means a cause of action that is brought by or on behalf of a child, seeks the child's economic or non-economic damages resulting from a condition of the child that existed at the time of the child's birth, and is based on a claim that a person's act or omission contributed to the mother's decision not to undergo an abortion.

Bill Sponsors

Representatives Kedzie, Walker, Huebsch, Ziegelbauer, Leibham, Duff, Owens, Gundrum, Hahn, Urban, Stone, Starzyk, Seratti, Freese, Vrakas, Grothman, Friske, Ott, Rhoades, Plale, Nass, Kreibich and Gunderson; cosponsored by Senators S. Fitzgerald, Cowles, Schultz, Roessler, Lazich and Baumgart.

CHILDREN & FAMILIES

History

Assembly Bill 360 was introduced on April 30, 2001, and referred to the Assembly Committee on Family Law. A public hearing was held on December 6, 2001. On January 17, 2002, the Committee voted 5-1 [Rep. Berceau voted no] to recommend passage of AB 360 as amended.

Republican Message

- Health care professionals who have done nothing to cause the child's disability will be protected from being sued for that disability.
- This bill recognizes that the lives of individuals with disabilities are valued as much as the lives of those without disabilities.
- AB 360 does not remove the duty of a physician to provide professional medical care to the mother and child, and does not insulate physicians from medical malpractice suits.

Opposing Message

- This bill would protect physicians who intentionally omit information regarding the availability of various prenatal diagnostic tests from being sued.
- AB 360 could result in pregnant women not receiving the best medical care should health care workers intentionally or negligently omit information regarding the availability of prenatal diagnostic tests or the result of such tests.

Supporters

Rep. Neal Kedzie, author; Sen. Scott Fitzgerald, lead co-sponsor; Mary Klaver, Wisconsin Right to Life; Mary Matuska and Peggy Hamill, Pro-Life Wisconsin; Kathy Markeland, Wisconsin Catholic Conference; and Mary Jane Stephan, Beloit.

Opposition

Lauren Besser, Jill Malak, and Morgan Sill, Wisconsin National Organization for Women; Paige Shipman, Lisa Boyce and Julie Fagon, Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin; Nora Cusack, National Abortion & Reproductive Rights Action League of Wisconsin; Laurie Jerin, American Assoc. of University Women; Constance Threinen, League of Women Voters of Wisconsin; Jane Peterson, Jason Clark and Cara Syth, Medical Students for Choice; Paul Sicula, Wisconsin Academy of Trial Lawyers; Dr. Douglas Laube, UW-Madison Medical Center; Dr. Scott Spear, Madison; plus fifteen other individuals not representing any particular group.

ASSEMBLY BILL 125: MARRIAGE & PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY INSTRUCTION

Summary

Current law permits a school board to provide instruction in human sexuality, reproduction, family planning, human immunodeficiency virus and acquired

Family
Law

CHILDREN & FAMILIES

immunodeficiency syndrome, prenatal development, childbirth, adoption, available prenatal and postnatal support, and male responsibility.

This bill allows a school board to provide instruction in both male and female responsibility. The bill also provides that if a school board offers instruction in any of these subjects relating to human sexuality, it must also offer instruction in marriage and parental responsibility.

History

The bill passed the Family Law Committee on a 6-0 vote.

Sponsors

Representatives Owens, McCormick, Ainsworth, Albers, Gunderson, Hundertmark, Krawczyk, Ladwig, Lassa, Musser, Ott, Seratti, Urban and Vrakas; cosponsored by Senator Welch and Lazich.

Republican Message

- We need to instill in our youth not only the responsibility of their actions, but also teach them how to have successful relationships and the skills needed for effective parenting. Quite often these can be subject areas that are difficult for some teens to discuss with their parents. Therefore, this will give teens the opportunity to discuss these issues with their peers and obtain a better understanding of the opposite sex by discussing their point of views.

A point of interest, under current law [Section 118.019(e)] addresses only male responsibility. This bill extends from male responsibility to both male and female responsibility.

Supporters

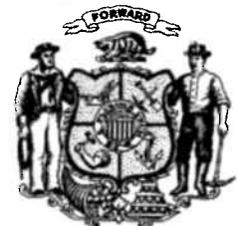
Representative Carol Owens, 53rd Assembly District (author); Heather Rasmussen, Fall River; Marvin Munyon, Family Research Forum, Madison. Mike TeRonde, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Madison; Linda Barth, State Bar of WI/Family Law Section, Madison

Opponents

Bill Barry, Janesville; Jayne Mullins, Madison



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



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4 babies saved under new law, officials say

By KAWANZA L. GRIFFIN of the Journal Sentinel staff

Last Updated: April 17, 2002

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War on Terrorism CLICK HERE

PHOTO OF THE DAY

Take 5 A DAILY Q&A

Archived Features:

Four babies have been saved in Wisconsin since the passing of a law last year that allows parents to leave unwanted newborns with hospital personnel, the police or emergency medical technicians, officials said Wednesday.

But despite the option, at least four other babies were abandoned in places such as ditches or bus stops during the same time period.

"We want to make sure that parents know that they have nothing to fear," said Helen Healy, president of Safe Place for Newborns of Wisconsin. "They can bring their baby right into the hospital and relinquish the child to anyone with a hospital ID."

Parents can also call 911 and arrange to have someone pick up the baby or meet them somewhere, if needed, she said.

Healy said the one of the first babies saved is the best example of the alternative that women now have to abandoning or killing their unwanted children.

"I got a call from a nurse in Wisconsin who just wanted me to know that a woman had delivered a baby into the toilet . . . but took the child out and brought it to the hospital to turn it in," she said. "Both received medical care and the baby is doing fine."

'Safe Haven'

The Law

Legislation: Assembly Bill 54 introducing 'Safe Haven' law (pdf)

More Information

For more information about the new law allowing mothers to surrender newborns, visit the Web site at safeplacefornewborns.com. The toll-free crisis line is (877) 440-BABY.

OnWisconsin Ticket

Bryant



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In April 2001, Gov. Scott McCallum signed the "safe haven" law which says that a mother can anonymously surrender their child to a police officer, an emergency medical technician, a member of a 911 emergency response team or at a hospital within 72 hours of giving birth and be free from criminal prosecution. After the baby is surrendered, the mother's parental rights are terminated in court and the baby is put up for adoption.

However, babies must be unharmed. If a child has been abused, neglected or harmed, the guarantee of anonymity and freedom from prosecution no longer apply.

Wisconsin was the 14th state to adopt the law; about 35 other states have similar legislation. Reps. Suzanne Jeskewitz (R-Menomonee Falls) and Jeff Plale (D-South Milwaukee) co-sponsored the original bill.

According to Healy, more than 98% of hospitals in the state are now active participants in the program and those that are not will be soon.

All four babies that were saved are either in foster care or in the process of being adopted, she said.

In January, a 19-year-old University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire freshman died after hiding her pregnancy and giving birth in a bathroom stall at a college dormitory. Paramedics found the baby girl when they removed her mother from the stall. The baby was hospitalized in critical condition and later died.

Earlier the same month, a woman abandoned her baby girl at a Superior bus stop in 10-below-zero cold. The baby, who was wrapped in towels and a blanket, was taken to a hospital and later released.

And in Ellsworth, the corpse of a newborn boy in a plastic bag was found in a Pierce County ditch.

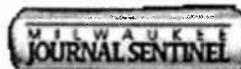
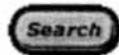
Safe Place will beginning airing a 30-second public service announcement this month to increase awareness about the program throughout the state.

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