

**Committee Name:**  
**Senate Committee –  
Higher Education and Tourism  
(SC–HET)**

**Appointments**

03hr\_SC–HET\_Appt\_pt00

**Committee Hearings**

03hr\_SC–HET\_CH\_pt00

**Committee Reports**

03hr\_SC–HET\_CR\_pt00

**Clearinghouse Rules**

03hr\_SC–HET\_CRule\_03–

**Executive Sessions**

03hr\_SC–HET\_ES\_pt00

**Hearing Records**  
**03hr\_ab0344**

03hr\_sb0000

**Misc.**

03hr\_SC–HET\_Misc\_pt00

**Record of Committee Proceedings**

03hr\_SC–HET\_RCP\_pt00



State Senator Sheila Harsdorf

**PAPER BALLOT**

**ASSEMBLY BILL 344**

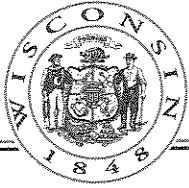
**Relating to: requiring certain college students  
to be vaccinated against or be informed about  
meningococcal disease.**

Concurrence:	
Aye	No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature:

*Sheila Harsdorf*

Please return to Senator Harsdorf's office by 12:00 PM,  
Wednesday, August 13, 2003.



State Senator Sheila Harsdorf

**PAPER BALLOT**

**ASSEMBLY BILL 344**

**Relating to: requiring certain college students to be vaccinated against or be informed about meningococcal disease.**

Signature:

Please return to Senator Harsdorf's office by 12:00 PM,  
Wednesday, August 13, 2003.

Concurrence:

Aye

No



State Senator Sheila Harsdorf

**PAPER BALLOT**

**ASSEMBLY BILL 344**

**Relating to: requiring certain college students to be vaccinated against or be informed about meningococcal disease.**

Passage as amended by	
<del>Assembly:</del>	
<i>Concurrence</i>	
Aye	No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature:

*Sheila Harsdorf*

Please return to Senator Harsdorf's office by 12:00 PM,  
Wednesday, August 13, 2003.



State Senator Sheila Harsdorf

**PAPER BALLOT**

**ASSEMBLY BILL 344**

**Relating to: requiring certain college students to be vaccinated against or be informed about meningococcal disease.**

Concurrence:

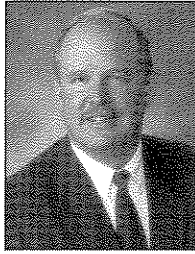
Aye

No

Signature:

*Roger Bresch*

Please return to Senator Harsdorf's office by 12:00 PM,  
Wednesday, August 13, 2003.



**DALE W. SCHULTZ**  
Wisconsin State Senator



Senate Higher Education and Tourism Committee

July 16, 2003

Testimony on AB 344 & SB 172

Madam Chairman and members of the committee, I want to thank you for taking the time to hold a hearing on this important legislation that would help reduce the prevalence of meningococcal disease among college students.

Meningitis is a potentially fatal bacterial infection, which can easily be transmitted through air droplets and direct contact with infected persons. Symptoms of meningitis often appear flu-like, making diagnosis difficult. This results in many young victims not being diagnosed in a timely manner, which worsens their chances for survival. I know you've heard stories of students reporting to emergency rooms with flu-like symptoms who are sent home, directed to get rest and plenty of fluids. In a few short hours, many of these students are dead, very often before their parents even knew they were sick.

Residence halls have a high concentration of people living in very close quarters making it easier to contract the disease from another. In fact, students residing in dormitories have a 7.67 times higher risk of meningococcal disease than do other college students.

The same used to be true within the military, which has a similar living environment to a dorm. The military has been vaccinating recruits since 1971, and the rate of the disease has dropped 90%. Every year approximately 180,000 military recruits are routinely vaccinated and the incidence of disease in the military continues to be low. Why not do the same on college campuses?

The original intent of AB 344 and the current SB 172 would require colleges and universities to send out information on meningococcal disease and advise students about the availability of the vaccine before they report to campus. There would be ample time for parents and students to review it and make an informed decision about whether or not to be vaccinated. It would require some administrative responsibility on the part of the schools to collect a signed waiver, in addition to other forms they already collect such as health forms, emergency contacts and housing information.

AB 344, which was amended both in committee and on the floor of the Assembly, changes the contents of the bill slightly. Assembly Substitute Amendment 2 to AB 344 now requires the universities to provide ALL students information on meningitis and Hepatitis B, not just those living in the residence halls. Those students living in the residence halls would be required to affirm that they have received the information. Those students that decide to get the vaccination would be required to inform the university of that fact and the dates the vaccinations were received. Additionally, the UW System and private colleges would be required to maintain confidential records of those students who receive the vaccinations.

Even with these changes, I feel that AB 344 is still a quality piece of legislation. Students will still be informed about the dangers of meningitis and now also Hepatitis B. The focus of this legislation is on prevention and education. I believe that AB 344 achieves these goals, and I ask for your support of the bill.

Thank you.



**Office of the President**

1720 Van Hise Hall  
1220 Linden Drive  
Madison, Wisconsin 53706-1559  
(608) 262-2321  
(608) 262-3985 Fax  
email: [klyall@uwsa.edu](mailto:klyall@uwsa.edu)  
website: <http://www.uwsa.edu>

**Testimony of David L. Miller  
Assistant Vice President, University Relations  
on Senate Bill 172 and Assembly Bill 344**

**Senate Committee on Higher Education and Tourism  
July 16, 2003**

Thank you Chairperson Harsdorf and members of the committee for an opportunity to speak in support of this legislation today. Senate Bill 172 and Assembly Bill 344 would ensure that every student living in a residence hall or dormitory would make an informed personal decision about obtaining a meningococcal vaccination.

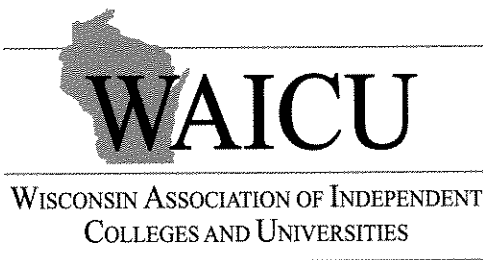
The UW System would like to thank the author of the Assembly bill, Chairman Kreibich, for working so diligently with us in drafting language to make the bill easier to administer and benefit the broadest number of students. The Assembly-passed substitute amendment would, we believe, maximize opportunities for students to become aware of and be immunized against most forms of meningitis. There are two improvements in the substitute amendment. First, the amendment requires that all students receive information rather than only residence hall students, and second, the amendment encourages students to obtain the vaccine at any time rather than a one time decision upon moving into a residence hall. The amendment adds Hepatitis B to the bill which does not pose a problem, but it is already a required vaccine in K-12.

Currently, every UW campus provides information about meningococcal disease and Hepatitis B to all students, but in various forms. I am providing the committee with a sample of this information. Many campuses also ask students to fill out immunization records. This bill will require that students are given information and then make an informed decision about whether to have the vaccine if they have not already had it.

Finally we appreciate the delayed implementation date of January 2004. Anticipating passage of this bill, we will be directing UW System campuses to begin to revise procedures to implement the new record keeping provisions.

Again, I want to thank the Assembly Chairman and committee for working closely with us on writing a bill that allows for maximum compliance by our students and institutions. I would be glad to try answer any questions you may have.

ALVERNO COLLEGE  
BELOIT COLLEGE  
CARDINAL STRITCH UNIVERSITY  
CARROLL COLLEGE  
CARTHAGE COLLEGE  
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY  
EDGEWOOD COLLEGE  
LAKELAND COLLEGE  
LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY  
MARIAN COLLEGE



MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY  
MILWAUKEE INSTITUTE OF ART & DESIGN  
MILWAUKEE SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING  
MOUNT MARY COLLEGE  
NORTHLAND COLLEGE  
RIPON COLLEGE  
ST. NORBERT COLLEGE  
SILVER LAKE COLLEGE  
VITERBO UNIVERSITY  
WISCONSIN LUTHERAN COLLEGE

## COMBINED TESTIMONY

on

**2003 Assembly Bill 344**

**2003 Senate Bill 172**

By

Paul Nelson, Vice President for Public Policy  
Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

### Senate Committee on Higher Education and Tourism

July 16, 2003

Senator Harsdorf and members of the committee, my name is Paul Nelson. I am Vice President for Public Policy for the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, or WAICU, representing the 20 private colleges and universities in Wisconsin and their more than 54,000 students.

I am testifying today in favor of AB 344, the Assembly's version of the bill that would require certain college students to be vaccinated against or be informed about meningococcal disease and hepatitis B. As you know, this bill was amended on the floor of the Assembly with bipartisan support from the bill's original sponsor, Representative Rob Kreibich, and co-sponsors Representatives Schneider and Underheim.

Assembly Bill 344 as amended recognizes that Wisconsin's colleges and universities play an important role in reducing the incidence of two potentially serious diseases facing college students: meningococcal disease and hepatitis B.

Since 1999, the Centers for Disease Control has recommended that college students, particularly freshmen living in dormitories and residence halls, be educated about meningococcal disease and the benefits of vaccination. This recommendation was based on studies showing that college students, particularly freshmen living in dormitories, have a sixfold increased risk for meningitis.

While meningitis is rare, when it strikes, its flu-like symptoms make diagnosis difficult. If not treated early, meningitis can lead to swelling of the fluid surrounding the brain and spinal column as well as severe and permanent disabilities, such as hearing loss, brain damage, seizures, limb amputation and death. And, while still few in number, cases of meningitis among teens and young adults in the 15 to 24 year age group have more than doubled since 1991.

The meningitis vaccine is safe and effective, and protects against four types of the bacteria that account for nearly two thirds of the meningitis cases among college students.



WAICU's 20 member colleges and universities are already taking steps to reduce the incidence of meningococcal disease:

- Our campuses now provide educational information to students and parents concerning meningococcal disease and the vaccine.
- About half of our members recommend or strongly recommend that students receive the vaccine. Our campuses are noticing increasing numbers of students who arrive on campus having received the vaccine at home.
- Most of our members offer the vaccine on campus, either through their student health centers or by arrangement with third parties, and have policies in place in the event of infections or suspected infections.

Regarding the hepatitis B infection, with the exception of influenza and pneumococcal infections, hepatitis B viral infections kill more people per year than any other vaccine-preventable disease.

The highest incidence of hepatitis B infection occurs in those 20 to 49 years of age. There is no cure for the disease, but the infection can be prevented by vaccination.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends vaccination for everyone 18 years of age and under. The American College Health Association (ACHA) encourages immunization for all college students, and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) urges all college athletes to be vaccinated.

The vaccine is already required by administrative rule by the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services for all students entering grades K through 12. However, there will always be a certain percentage of students entering our colleges and universities from out of state, or Wisconsin students who were not vaccinated at a younger age. This bill ensures that all students attending college in Wisconsin will have the latest information about this potentially serious disease.

Wisconsin's private colleges and universities put their students first and stand ready to fulfill their obligations under the bill. I would be happy to answer questions.