



## WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

### STRENGTHENING WISCONSIN FAMILIES

Legislative Council Conference Room  
Madison, Wisconsin

March 19, 2007  
10:00 a.m. – 3:10 p.m.

[The following is a summary of the March 19, 2007 meeting of the Special Committee on Strengthening Wisconsin Families. The file copy of this summary has appended to it a copy of each document prepared for or submitted to the committee during the meeting. A digital recording of the meeting is available on our Web site at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc>.]

#### Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Kestell called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. The roll was called and a quorum was present.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Rep. Steve Kestell, Chair; Rep. Don Pridemore; Sen. Lena Taylor; and Public Members Jon Angeli, John Burgess, Charity Eleson, Carol Kelso, Paul Minkus, Kenneth Munson, Paula Roberts, Jack Westman, and Carol Wright.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED: Sen. Dale Schultz; Rep. Donna Seidel; and Public Members Lisa Boyd-Gonzalez and Jodi Roberts.

COUNCIL STAFF PRESENT: Laura Rose, Deputy Director; and Scott Grosz, Staff Attorney.

#### Approval of the Minutes of the February 7, 2007 Meeting

*Mr. Angeli, moved, seconded by Dr. Westman, to approve the minutes of the February 7, 2007 meeting of the Special Committee. The motion was approved by a voice vote.*

## Discussion of Committee Assignment

Chair Kestell began the meeting with remarks on Governor Doyle's budget proposal to merge the child welfare division of the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS), the W-2 division of the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), and other divisions from each department into a Department of Children and Families. The committee discussed the proposed merger as well as the affect on the committee of a particular section of the budget bill. The particular proposed section would repeal s. 13.83 (4) (a) 9., Stats., from the statutory authorization for the committee. The repeal of this section would remove the issue of merger between DHFS and DWD from the issues to be considered by the committee.

At its January 9, 2007 meeting, the committee began discussions of Memo No. 6, *Options for Legislation on Strengthening Wisconsin Families*. At the March 19, 2007 meeting, the committee continued to discuss the topics presented in Memo No. 6. First, the committee discussed the suggestions of Judge James A. Gramling, Jr., related to transportation issues. The committee noted the use of driver's license suspension as a punishment for non-traffic offenses and asked the Legislative Council staff to compile a list of non-traffic offenses which may be punished by license suspension. The committee also suggested that a bill draft related to transportation issues could incorporate the suggestions Judge Gramling made when he spoke to the committee on February 7, 2007.

Next, the committee discussed the topic of confidentiality and information sharing between agencies. Scott Grosz, Legislative Council Staff Attorney, summarized the committee's previous comments on the topic. Chair Kestell noted that the issue of expanding agency access to information will be very important to the proposed Department of Children and Families.

The committee described several components to the topic of confidentiality, including "turf" issues, information technology issues, federal guidelines, and differences in agency missions. The committee also discussed the privacy interests that would be affected by increased access to information. The committee asked the Legislative Council staff to identify the federal restrictions related to information sharing between agencies as well as to consult with state and county agency staff regarding situations when the lack of information sharing creates challenges for state and county agencies.

Adult basic education was the next topic discussed by the committee. Committee member Charity Eleson, Executive Director, Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, suggested several legislative options related to adult basic education. A memorandum, *Workforce Recommendations*, enclosed in Memo No. 6, outlined the options presented by Ms. Eleson. Those options include better coordination of GED and post-secondary education, dual enrollment opportunities in the Wisconsin technical college system, and financial aid access for students enrolled less than half time. The committee instructed the Legislative Council staff to prepare a bill draft for options related to adult basic education. The committee also asked the Legislative Council staff to solicit feedback from the two-year UW System campuses regarding whether those campuses could contribute to the policy changes suggested by Ms. Eleson.

The committee reviewed the option to draft legislation that would require the preparation of family impact statements for future legislation. Scott Grosz explained the concept of impact statements and provided examples of impact statements prepared under current law. Mr. Burgess asked the

question of whether impact statements were effective. Chair Kestell and Senator Taylor responded that the value of an impact statement may be manipulated in order to achieve a desired goal.

Chair Kestell also noted several issues related to family impact statements including their content, situations when the statements would be required, and how to determine which agency would be responsible for completing the statements. After discussion of these issues, the committee appeared to reach the consensus that family impact statements may not be an effective way to raise awareness for families. Chair Kestell suggested alternative ways in which the committee may be able to raise awareness for families, including the suggestion that the committee draft a letter regarding the proposed creation of the Department of Children and Families.

### **WLC: 0075/1, Relating to Collaborative Systems of Care for Families**

The committee discussed WLC: 0075/1, a bill draft related to collaborative systems of care for families. Laura Rose, Legislative Council Deputy Director, explained the draft to the committee. Dan Naylor, White Pine Consulting Service, Inc., Waupaca, appeared before the committee and provided additional feedback on components of the draft related to coordinated service teams. He emphasized the importance of including certain procedures in the draft. The committee decided to create a subcommittee to incorporate Mr. Naylor's suggestions and consider other drafting options for collaborative systems of care for families.

### **Other Business**

There was no other business before the Special Committee at this time.

### **Plans for Future Meetings**

The next meeting will be held on *Monday, April 30, 2007, at 10:00 a.m., in the Large Conference Room, Legislative Council, 1 East Main Street, Suite 401, Madison, Wisconsin*. Also, the Subcommittee on Collaborative Systems of Care of the Special Committee on Strengthening Wisconsin Families, will meet on *Monday, April 16, 2007, at 1:00 p.m., in the Large Conference Room, Legislative Council*.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

SG:ty