



WISCONSIN FAMILY ACTION
Marriage|Family|Life|Liberty

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**TESTIMONY ON ASSEMBLY BILL 183
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2019
JULIAINE K. APPLING, PRESIDENT**

Thank you, Chairman Sanfelippo and committee members, for holding this hearing on Assembly Bill 183. Wisconsin Family Action supports this bill with a significant caveat. I regret that I am unable to attend the hearing due to a previously scheduled business trip and appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony digitally.

Wisconsin Family Action has a long and solid history of supporting efforts to stop public funding of abortion providers, and we are grateful for Representative Dittrich's and Senator Stroebel's working to continue that effort with Assembly Bill 183.

As a matter of long-standing principle, we have always preferred that bills dealing with abortion not include exceptions and have encouraged authors to draft bills accordingly. However, upon occasion we have ended up supporting a bill with exceptions, while making it clear that we object to the exceptions. Such is the case with this bill.

Assembly Bill 183's highly laudable intent is to ultimately prevent Medicaid funding from going to entities that provide abortions or that are an affiliate of an entity that provides abortion. Unfortunately, the bill provides a significant carve-out for hospitals that perform abortions in certain situations: the termination is directly and medically necessary to save the life of the woman; the pregnancy is the result of sexual assault or incest, which has been reported to law enforcement; or the termination is, due to a medical condition existing prior to the abortion, directly and medically necessary to prevent grave, long-lasting physical health damage to the woman.

While we realize hospitals pose some unusual challenges, we believe this bill could and should be amended to include hospitals in its decertifying requirement. While we support the bill in general concept, we cannot give a wholesale endorsement of the bill with this express exemption for hospitals. Should the authors agree to such an amendment of this bill, we would be more than happy to give full and unequivocal support.