



WISCONSIN FAMILY ACTION  
Marriage|Family|Life|Liberty

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## LEGISLATIVE ISSUES 2019-2020 WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE SESSION

### MARRIAGE/FAMILY

#### **AB 41/SB 49 – *Decriminalization of child prostitution.* (WFA opposes)**

Despite intentions and motives of those authoring and co-sponsoring this bill Wisconsin Family Action believes this proposal is ill-advised because it takes a tool away from law enforcement who are trying to get minors engaged in prostitution off the streets, assumes all minors involved in this activity are being coerced and gives an advantage to the Johns and the pimps to recruit more minors into their nefarious work, including sex trafficking. **A substitute amendment was offered by author Republican Senator Alberta Darling. This amendment improved the bill. The Senate passed the bill on November 5, 2019, and sent it to the Assembly where it is currently in the Rules committee ready to be scheduled for a floor vote. The Assembly committee has already recommended the bill for passage.**

#### **AB 71/SB 68 – *Possession of child pornography* (WFA supports)**

This bill tightens up the definition of child pornography making it easier to bring charges against someone who is engaged in this activity. **The bill passed in both the Senate and the Assembly. Governor Evers signed it into law in July as 2019 Wisconsin Act 16.**

#### **AB 111/SB 107 – *Prohibiting so-called “conversion therapy” for minors* (WFA opposes)**

This bill prohibits certain mental health workers from actually providing real hope and real help for minors dealing with unwanted same-sex attraction and/or gender confusion. It makes it clear that the only advice these mental health workers can give is that which affirms, normalizes and encourages minors to continue with these beliefs and behaviors. The bill trounces on religious freedom of mental health workers and on the rights of parents regarding counseling for their children. **This bill is in committee in both the Assembly and the Senate; no further action to date.**

#### **AB 201/SB 191 – *Creating a nonrefundable tax credit for adoption expenses* (WFA supports)**

The intent of this bill is to encourage Wisconsin families to adopt children. This \$5,000 tax credit piggybacks on the federal adoption tax credit and helps parents offset some of the costs related to adoption, which today can be very expensive. **These bills are in committee in both the Assembly and the Senate. No further action to date.**

#### **AB 248/SB 262 – *Removing “personal conviction” exemption from vaccination requirements* (WFA opposes)**

Wisconsin currently has three options for parents seeking to exempt their children from vaccinations: health, religious and personal conviction. This bill would remove “personal conviction,” which would make it harder for parents choosing to not vaccinate their children. **These bills are in committee in both the Assembly and the Senate. No further action to date.**

**AB 439/SB 398 -*Eliminating waiting period after a divorce is finalized before a re-marriage* (WFA opposes)**  
Wisconsin law currently requires that after a divorce is finalized that an individual must wait six months before entering into another marriage, whether that marriage is in Wisconsin or another state or country. This waiting period is both reasonable and responsible, especially if minor children are involved. The state has a valid interest in the well-being of the next generation. Parents rushing into another marriage immediately after a divorce is not in the adults' best interest and certainly not in the best interest of minor children who are already dealing with much uncertainty and loss as a result of their parents' divorce. The bill is authored by Republicans with substantial Republican support as co-sponsors, along with some Democrats. **Both the Senate and the Assembly committees have held public hearings on the bill. The Senate Committee has passed it, but the Assembly Committee has not yet voted on the bill.**

### ***EDUCATION*** (subheading of Marriage/Family)

**AB 108/no senate version yet – *Requiring parental choice program schools and charter schools to provide instruction in American Indian history, culture, and tribal sovereignty.* (WFA opposes)**

WFA does not support more requirements for voucher schools. We do not believe this curricular mandate does anything to increase the educational value in any given school. It simply takes away from time that could be better spent. We believe most schools cover this topic already in the course of implementing their curriculum across the grades. **This bill is in committee; no further action to date.**

**AB 129/SB 111 - *Allowing voucher schools to provide pupil instruction virtually* (WFA supports)**

This bill levels the playing field with public schools by allowing voucher schools to offer direct pupil instruction virtually—to make up for missed time due to extreme weather closings and also as a part of the regular program of the school. **These bills are in committee in both the Assembly and the Senate. No further action to date.**

**AB 149/SB 138 – *Funding character education in public schools* (WFA opposes)**

Character education under this bill is not defined—and there is too much room for “character” to be stretched beyond its typical meaning and understanding. The bill authorizes DPI to award grants to schools to pay teachers to receive “professional development trainings in character education.” **The Senate Education Committee held a public hearing and voted to move the bill to the full Senate. As of this update, the bill has not been scheduled for a Senate floor vote. There has been no public hearing on the Assembly version.**

### **LIFE**

**AB 128/SB 114 – *Creating a tax credit for parents who experience a stillbirth* (WFA supports)**

This bill seeks to compensate parents who have had a stillbirth for some of the costs related to this heart-rending situation (up to \$2,000). **These bills are in committee in both the Assembly and the Senate. No further action to date.**

**AB 179/SB 175 – *Born Alive bill* (WFA supports with one concern)**

This bill requires any health care provider present at the time an abortion or attempted abortion results in a child born alive to exercise the same degree of professional skill, care and diligence to preserve the life and health of the child as a reasonably diligent and conscientious health care provider would render to any other child born alive. The bill makes intentionally causing the death of a child born alive as a result of an abortion or attempted abortion a felony with a penalty of life imprisonment. WFA's concern is that the bill has an express exemption for a woman who intentionally kills her baby that has managed to survive an abortion or an attempted abortion. **Passed in Assembly & Senate. Governor vetoed.**

**AB 180/SB 174 – *Requiring that women taking RU-486 be told there is a reversal to the abortion-causing drug* (WFA supports)**

This bill requires certain information regarding an abortion-inducing drug regimen to be given to a woman who is planning to have an abortion induced by this abortion-inducing drug regimen. This is primarily about RU-486. Essentially the bill requires that the woman be told that the first drug in the regimen may not result in an immediate abortion and that if she acts quickly, she can reverse the effects of the first drug and perhaps save her baby. This information would be added to the Woman’s Right to Know publication. The bill also requires that any place an abortion takes place, including a hospital, certain information must be collected and reported. The bill adds to what the law already requires abortionists to report. **Passed in Assembly & Senate. Governor vetoed.**

**AB 181/SB 199 – *Stopping taxpayer funded Medicaid payments from going to most abortion providers* (WFA supports)**

This bill generally prohibits an entity that does abortions from receiving Medicaid payments. **This bill is effectively dead with the legislature having voted on AB 183/SB 187.**

**AB 182/SB 173 – *Prohibiting abortions based on sex, race, nationality, ethnicity or disability* (WFA supports with one concern).**

Our concern is that the bill has an exception related to disability. That exception deals with a situation where medical professionals determine an unborn baby has a disability that is deemed “fatal,” meaning the child is unlikely to survive outside the womb and the condition is not treatable. We believe this is an unnecessary exception. **Passed in Assembly & Senate. Governor vetoed.**

**AB 183/SB 187 - *Stopping taxpayer-funded Medicaid payments from going to most abortion providers* (WFA supports).**

This bill generally prohibits an entity that does abortions from receiving Medicaid payments. **Passed in Assembly & Senate. Governor vetoed.**

**AB 590/SB 524 -*Prohibits the sale and use of the body parts of aborted babies, requires reporting of the sex and any fetal anomaly of an aborted baby, and requires proper final disposition of an aborted baby* (WFA supports)**

This bill has been introduced in prior legislative sessions. Even with a Republican governor and strong Republican majorities in the Senate and the Assembly, the bill has never received a floor vote. Current Republican leadership does not seem inclined to move these bills at all. **The bills are currently in committee in both the Senate and the Assembly; no public hearing has been scheduled.**

## **LIBERTY**

**AB 185/SB 197 – *Changing how WI’s electoral votes are allocated* (WFA opposes)**

This bill erodes the Electoral College. Instead of awarding WI’s 10 electoral votes to the presidential candidate who wins the popular vote in our state, those 10 votes would go to the presidential candidate who wins the national popular vote. **These bills are in committee in both the Assembly and the Senate. No further action to date.**

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

**SB 577/no Assembly version to date – *Decriminalizing 28 grams or less of marijuana* (WFA opposes)**

This bill makes a number of changes in the current law as it relates to bringing charges against a person who possesses, attempts to possess, possesses with the intent to manufacture, distribute, or deliver marijuana. WFA believes marijuana is a gateway drug that leads to using other harder drugs and that

marijuana use in and of itself can significantly impair judgment and alter behavior. Twenty-eight grams of marijuana is the equivalent of over 80 “joints.” **The bill is currently in committee; no further action to date.**

**AJR 106/SJR 75 – *Renaming the decorated tree in the capitol rotunda during the Christmas holiday season as the Wisconsin State Christmas Tree* (WFA supports)**

These joint resolutions reflect the long-standing tradition of referring to the tree in the capitol rotunda during Christmas as a Christmas tree, not a holiday tree as Governor Evers refers to it. **The Assembly passed the resolution in November on a bi-partisan vote; the resolution is waiting for action in the Senate.**

**AJR 108/SJR 59 – *Prohibiting the governor from using the partial veto to increase state expenditures (first consideration)* (WFA supports)**

This resolution would amend the Wisconsin constitution to prevent the governor from using his/her partial veto power in an appropriations bill (like the state budget) to increase state expenditures for any purpose other than what is provided in the bill that is presented to him/her for signing. A proposed constitutional amendment requires adoption by two successive legislatures and then ratification by the people in a statewide referendum before it becomes law. If this resolution passes both the Assembly and the Senate this session (which concludes December 31, 2020), then it would need to be reintroduced and passed again sometime between January 2021 and December 2022 before it could be put on a statewide referendum. **The Senate passed the resolution in November; the Assembly has not held a public hearing yet on the proposal.**

*Updated December 16, 2019*