



WISCONSIN FAMILY ACTION
Marriage|Family|Life|Liberty

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**TESTIMONY ON ASSEMBLY BILL 493
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2021
JULIAINE K. APPLING, PRESIDENT**

Thank you, Chairman Sanfelippo and committee members, for holding this hearing on Assembly Bill 493. Wisconsin Family Action supports this bill with a significant concern.

Wisconsin Family Action has a long and solid history of supporting efforts to stop public funding of abortion providers, and we are grateful Representative Dittrich continues working to find ways to accomplish that. 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 493's highly laudable intent is to ultimately prevent Medicaid/Medical Assistance 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.

Thank you for your thoughtful and careful attention to our position on this bill.