



**WISCONSIN FAMILY ACTION**  
Marriage|Family|Life|Liberty

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**TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 503**  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,**  
**LEGAL REVIEW & CONSUMER PROTECTION**  
**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2021**  
**JULIAINE K. APPLING, PRESIDENT**

Thank you, Chairman Strobel and committee members, for holding this hearing on Senate Bill 503. 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 you, Senator Stroebel, continue 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. Senate Bill 503'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 hospitals are exempted for these exceptions, we don't believe the situation that resulted in a pregnancy, as horrific as assault and incest are, diminishes the inherent value of the life of the unborn child. Further, on the medical situations enumerated in the bill, we firmly believe that we no longer have "either/or" when it comes to saving the life of the mother or the life of the unborn baby. Medical experts repeatedly tell us it is now "both/and"—saving both the mother and the unborn child. If the child dies as a result of efforts to save the mother, while terribly sad and regrettable, that is a far different situation from intentionally killing the unborn baby to try to save the mother.

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 it 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. To that end, we support Amendment 1 to the Assembly version of the bill, Assembly Bill 493.

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