

# Pro-Life Wisconsin



*Defending them all...*

P.O. Box 221 Brookfield, WI 53008-0221

Phone (262) 796-1111

Fax (262) 796-1115

info@prolifewisconsin.org

www.prolifewisconsin.org

## Your first and last line of defense in Madison

Pro-Life Wisconsin is proud to be your 100% pro-life voice at the State Capitol during every legislative session. With their takeover of the State Senate in November 2006, pro-abortion Democrats relentlessly pushed their abortion/family planning agenda. PLW was successful in killing all of their anti-life bills except for one: The Chemical Abortion Hospital Mandate. Let's recap what your PLW legislative affairs team worked on during the 2007-08 session.

### **Forcing chemical abortion on Wisconsin's hospitals:**

Pro-Life Wisconsin (PLW) led the fight against Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin's number one agenda item - the Chemical Abortion Hospital Mandate. Despite a long and hard fought battle, Governor Doyle signed Assembly Bill (AB) 377 into law in March of this year. Wisconsin Act 102 forces all Wisconsin hospitals, regardless of their religious affiliation, to provide "emergency contraception (EC)" to alleged victims of sexual assault upon their request.

PLW's primary opposition to Act 102 is based on the abortion-causing action of so-called emergency contraception which, under the bill, is defined to include both the morning-after pill and the intrauterine device (IUD). The morning-after pill can work after fertilization to cause a pre-implantation chemical abortion. The IUD works to block implantation and therefore always causes an abortion. Assembly Bill 377 also violates the conscience rights protections found in our state and federal constitutions.

Regrettably, three organizations that opposed this legislation in past sessions – Wisconsin Right to Life (WRL), the Wisconsin Catholic Conference (WCC), and the Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) – changed their position to neutral. This provided great political momentum to a formerly marginalized bill and ultimately ensured its passage. One need only listen to the public hearings and floor debates to confirm this fact.

PLW gives special thanks to the Wisconsin Guilds of the Catholic Medical Association who fought valiantly against this bill, providing both written and public testimony. We are currently working with the Guilds and legal associations such as the Alliance Defense Fund and Liberty Council to potentially challenge this flagrantly unconstitutional law.

### **Expanding Medicaid Family Planning Demonstration Project to cover teen boys:**

Pro-Life Wisconsin worked successfully with Assembly Republican leadership to remove from the final biennial budget bill a proposal to expand the *Medicaid Family Planning Demonstration Project* to include 15, 16, 17-year-old boys. The project currently provides free, taxpayer-funded birth control to teen girls of similar age without their parents' knowledge or consent. This undermines parental authority and increases underage pregnancy, abortion, and sexually transmitted diseases by encouraging sexual promiscuity. Both the Governor's budget and the Senate Democrat's budget would have expanded the project to men aged 15-44.

The state should reinforce the parent-child relationship, not undermine it. Who do we want to be the confidants of our sons and daughters – parents, or Planned Parenthood? Thankfully, the state legislature refrained from further damaging parents and teens with their decision to drop this nonsensical budget item.

**Cancelling minor girls' access to Medicaid Family Planning Demonstration Project:**

Pro-Life Wisconsin worked the last two legislative sessions to block minor girls' access to the *Medicaid Family Planning Demonstration Project* by raising the minimum eligibility age from 15 to 18. The project currently provides free, taxpayer-funded birth control to teen girls without their parents' knowledge or consent. Federal and state law prohibits parents from being notified that their minor daughters are receiving free contraceptives under this demonstration project. For minors, family income is disregarded as an eligibility factor so virtually every teen girl in the state is financially eligible. Seven states – Illinois, Michigan, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Alabama, New Mexico, and Louisiana – prevent minor girls from enrolling in their respective family planning waiver programs, limiting them to women who are at least 19 years of age. Pennsylvania and Texas limit their programs to women at least 18 years of age.

PLW worked to include a provision in the Assembly Republican's budget that would have raised the project's minimum eligibility age from 15 to 18. The provision was ultimately pulled from the final biennial budget bill, but its presence neutralized the Senate Democrat's attempt to expand the project to teen boys, as described above. Separate legislation to raise the eligibility age (Senate Bill 460 / Assembly Bill 852) was then introduced by Senator Glenn Grothman and Representative Dan LeMahieu but failed as time ran out at the end of the session.

**Forcing pharmacists to dispense abortifacient drugs:**

Emboldened by passage of the Chemical Abortion Hospital Mandate, Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin and their pro-abortion allies in the State Senate made a last-ditch attempt in the final week of session to force the hand of our state's pro-life pharmacists. The Wisconsin State Senate voted 19-14 in favor of Senate Bill (SB) 232, the so-called "Birth Control Protection Act." Fortunately, the bill died upon adjournment of the Assembly and Senate.

Senate Bill 232 would have forced all licensed Wisconsin pharmacists, regardless of their medical and moral judgment, to dispense the morning-after pill and other FDA-approved abortion-causing contraceptive drugs. The bill also would have redefined the statutory definition of abortion to exclude all FDA-approved contraceptive drugs and devices. Violators would have been subject to current law standard of practice penalties ranging from forfeitures to license revocation.

Conscientious pharmacists exercise their refusal to dispense birth control in a peaceful, non-judgmental and professional manner. SB 232 would completely abrogate any and all good-faith accommodations between pharmacists of conscience and their employers. Pharmacists, like doctors and nurses, are valued members of the professional health care team who should not be forced to choose between their consciences and their livelihoods. Pro-Life Wisconsin strongly opposed SB 232 in committee and on the floor and we will continue to fight this legislation in future sessions.

**Repealing Wisconsin's criminal abortion statute:**

For decades, pro-abortion legislators have been introducing bills to repeal Wisconsin's pre-*Roe v. Wade* criminal abortion statute, 940.04, which is currently unenforceable. If *Roe* were to be overturned, Wisconsin is one of four states that have existing statutes that would take effect criminalizing abortion.

Wisconsin Statute 940.04 contains tough penalties for performing an abortion. However, 940.04 allows abortions "if necessary to save the life of the mother." Should *Roe* be overturned someday and the abortion issue remanded to the states, this exception would have to be corrected either by amending the statute or,

preferably, the state constitution. Pro-Life Wisconsin opposed Senate Bill 398. The bill received a public hearing but died in committee without a vote.

There are no situations where abortion, defined as the direct and intentional killing of an unborn child, is medically necessary to save the life of the mother. Medical operations such as the removal of an ectopic pregnancy are moral even under Catholic teaching and are not considered abortions. They are justified by the principle of double effect, because the death of the embryonic child is an unintended effect of an operation independently justified to save the mother's life. They do not involve the intentional killing of an unborn child. One should never attempt to codify in law the value of one innocent human life over and above another. Physicians must make their best effort to save both patients, giving equal care to mother and child. They should never be given a license to intentionally kill either of them.

**Legalizing physician-assisted suicide:**

Once again, PLW beat back an attempt to legalize physician-assisted suicide in Wisconsin. For the first time in ten years, the legislation received a public hearing. Senate Bill (SB) 151 would "permit certain individuals to make written requests for medication for the purpose of ending their lives." It would legalize assisted suicide for people over the age of 18 who have a "terminal disease" and who make a written request to their attending physician for medication to kill themselves. A physician who refuses to participate in the assisted suicide must make a good faith attempt to transfer the patient to another physician whom he or she knows will help kill the patient. If the physician does not make an attempt to transfer, he or she may be charged with "unprofessional conduct."

Pro-Life Wisconsin exposed the truth about SB 151. We sent a strong message to our elected officials that we will not allow the state to sanction the destruction of the vulnerable disabled, elderly, depressed or other marginalized lives around us. The bill died in committee without a vote.

*Thank you again for all your support in encouraging and challenging our legislators to stand up for life. **Your voice does make a difference!** Stay tuned to PLW for information on electing pro-life leaders this fall.*