

(Name and Address of State Senator)

(Date)

Dear (Name of Senator),

I am writing you with grave concerns about AB 458 which passed the Assembly this past November and is now being debated in the Senate. The “Healthy Youth Act” presents a misguided effort to define and shape the health of the school age children in Wisconsin. I believe this bill weakens the role of parents in their own children’s education, encourages rather than discourages sexual activity outside of marriage, promotes a bias against students committed to saving sexual activity until marriage, encourages widespread contraceptive use in teens and prevents many school districts that currently use abstinence until marriage curricula from continuing to do so.

WEAKENS PARENTS ROLE IN EDUCATION

Current legislation allows local districts to determine the type of human growth and develop education based on the recommendations of an advisory committee that has parental membership. The proposed legislation will remove local control over what is taught, thereby eliminating any parental input on the development of the curriculum. The most problematic aspect of this comes in the determination of when information is deemed ‘age appropriate’. Conceivably, children as young as 5th grade may be introduced to contraceptive practices. Even if one accepted the dubious argument that contraception should be introduced in counties with a high teen pregnancy rate, this does not describe most of the counties throughout Wisconsin. Moreover, contraception is not the choice of most parents in our state, especially since the best way to prevent teen pregnancy is to reduce teen sexual activity, not increase contraception.

ENCOURAGES SEXUAL ACTIVITY OUTSIDE OF MARRIAGE

Current legislation requires that education on sexual activity be paired with instruction on marriage and parenting, and that it discourage sexual activity outside of marriage. The proposed legislation detaches any instruction on sex from that of marriage and parenting. This is a blatant separation of sex from marriage. – one that social science research clearly finds detrimental to our society (see State of Our Union reports from University of Virginia www.virginia.edu/marriageproject).

PROMOTES BIAS AGAINST STUDENTS COMMITTED TO SAVING SEXUAL ACTIVITY UNTIL MARRIAGE

Current legislation allows teachers to express the benefits of saving sexual activity *until marriage*. However, proposed legislation would not allow for this discourse as it might “promote a bias against sexually active students”. It is interesting that this part of the

proposed bill is in direct opposition to State Statute 948.02(2) which states “(w)hoever has sexual contact or sexual intercourse with a person who has not attained the age of 16 is guilty of a Class C felony.” It seems illogical that state legislators would pass a bill that has a ‘bias’ against following current state laws and/or attaching sexual activity to marriage.

ENCOURAGEMENT OF CONTRACEPTIVE USE

The proposed legislation requires the state superintendent to apply for federal funds to implement an evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention program. The evidence that the

state superintendent would have to provide is an increase in contraceptive use. This again seems illogical as the best way to prevent teen pregnancy is to reduce teen sexual activity, not increase contraception. (www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/contraception/contrafactsheet.pdf)

DISCONTINUATION OF ABSTINENCE UNTIL MARRIAGE CURRICULA

Because of the wording of the proposed legislation, school districts that use curricula like **Project Reality** would be forced to drop instruction that is currently reducing teen pregnancy in their community. What is the logic in discontinuing education that is already meeting the stated goal of “reducing teen pregnancy”? Further, the proposed legislation would allow a volunteer health care provider to teach the entire human growth and development curriculum in a school. Many of the cash-strapped public schools will find it hard to resist this offer of free instruction from groups like Planned Parenthood whose livelihood is dependent on the sale of contraceptive services and other procedures.

I oppose this bill and hope that you will fight its passage. Please vote against Senate Bill 324 which would result in unhealthy practices for our precious youth. Current law already allows districts who want to teach comprehensive sex education to do so. It is wrong to force districts that effectively teach human growth and development using abstinence education to stop.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,