

**Governor’s Council on Domestic Abuse
April 11, 2018**

- Present:** Senator Tim Carpenter, Nela Kalpic, Susan Perry, Renee Schulz, Susan Sippel, Representative Lisa Subeck, Alena Taylor, Gerald Urbik, Shirley Armstrong, Kevin Hamberger, Mark Thomas, Adam Tobias (on behalf of Rep. Andre Jacque)
- Excused:** Representative Andre Jacque, Patricia Ninmann
- Guests:** Tony Wilkin Gibart (End Domestic Abuse WI), Lauren Banks (CMR), David Bowles (CMR), Chase Terrier (End Domestic Abuse WI)
- Staff:** Sharon Lewandowski and Kaitlin Tolliver
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Call to Order and Approval of Minutes

Co-Chair Sue Sippel called the meeting to order with a quorum present at 9:10 a.m. New Staff member Kaitlin Tolliver was welcomed. Sharon Lewandowski will be leaving her position as Staff on the council. The Council unanimously congratulated Sharon on her years of service, tenacity, leadership, and motivation. The minutes of the February 2018 meeting were reviewed and approved as submitted.

Committee Reports

Access Committee:

The Committee reviewed the product made in the previous meeting, which categorized various projects and directions for the coming year. Out of the four potential areas, support for the “See Me, Hear Me, Pay Me” category had the most support. The Committee intends to do a series of projects to work towards supporting employers and bilingual advocates within the workplace. The Committee will begin by understanding the current state of bilingual advocates pay and workplace support by surveying both bilingual advocates and directors and intends to take that information to inform resources for domestic violence agencies. The Committee has also coordinated a sub-committee to work towards creating a language access plan template for domestic violence agencies.

Budget Committee

A subgroup of the Committee continues to work on an update of the “Fair Minimum” Budget for Domestic Abuse Programs. The Committee is trying to identify a suggested percentage of operation costs. They were able to finalize suggested fixed benefit rates at 15% and suggested optional benefit rate at 25%. The Committee is working on a more accurate way to identify the “size” of domestic violence agencies (ex: use number of beds, rooms, or people served). Once the document has been made final, the Committee will work towards a dissemination and promotion plan, along with tools to help agencies in providing the suggested Fair Minimum Wage.

The Committee is preparing for beginning the next Long Range Plan.

Legislative and Policy Committee:

The Committee had two Department of Corrections agents, an Administrative Law Judge, and representatives from the Office of Crime Victims Services with the Victim Witness Program come to speak about the revocation process. The Committee conducted a mapping exercise that helped them to identify current strengths, challenges, gaps, and opportunities within the revocation process. The Committee will use the information gained to begin identifying where to focus future projects.

Legislative Update

Chase Tarrrier from End Domestic Abuse WI presented on a document he prepared summarizing the 2017-2018 State Legislative Session Recap (see attached document). Chase also reported that the Legislative Study Committee will vote on April 13th. He spoke of 3 studies of potential interest to the Council:

- Child Placement and Custody
- Bail and Bond
- Body Camera

The study committees will begin meeting in 2019.

Presentation on Dare 2 Know (End Abuse WI's statewide media/social marketing campaign): The Council welcomed the following members of Creative Marketing Resources (CMR): Lauren Banks and David Bowles.

Lauren and David reviewed the power point presentation they prepared (see attached).

Old Business

Review of Meeting with WI Batterers Treatment Association (WBTA):

The Council reviewed the history and presentation conducted by WBTA during the February 2018 Council meeting. The Council continued to discuss concerns regarding the uninformed practice across the State in providing Batterers Treatment along with how the lack of a certifying body may affect the legislation allowing for rebuttable presumptions in child placement cases when an abuser completes a “certified” batterers program. Although no specific plan was identified within the Council, the Council hopes to follow up with members from WBTA following the group’s annual meeting in April 2018 where the Council believes they may make a determination on their status as an organization.

New Business

Review of Workman’s Compensation Insurance Coding for Domestic Abuse Program Employees:

Council Member, Mark Thomas, led a conversation around the changes he has seen over the past few years with worker’s compensation rates being increased for the employees at his domestic abuse agency, Sojourner Family Center. Starting around 2011, shelter program employees started to become classified as “Group Home” workers, which costs over \$4.00/\$100.00 more than comparable “Clerical Office” employees cost. The definition from “Group Home” employee is as follows: “*Includes group homes, group foster homes, halfway houses that provide rehabilitation services, shelters, and independent supportive living homes for mentally, physically or emotionally challenged individuals...*” The Council unanimously agreed that working within a domestic abuse shelter is vastly different from working within a group home environment supporting mentally, physically or emotionally challenged individuals. The Council agrees that this is something that needs to be investigated further to identify if there is a way to make positive change in worker’s compensation charges for domestic violence shelter workers. The Budget Committee intends to meet on this topic during their July 2018 meeting.

Planning for 2018 Awards for Outstanding Achievement in Domestic Abuse Issues:

Sharon Lewandowski provided a brief overview of the three awards given out at the awards ceremony: Justice, Courage, and Lifetime Achievement. She described the typically process of the ceremony. Past challenges have been a sometimes low number of nominations. Sharon will email the Council members to identify if any members wish to work alongside the Chair’s in planning for the ceremony.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

2017 – 2018 State Legislative Session Recap

Prepared by Chase Tarrier



When the State Senate adjourned on March 20, the 2017 to 2018 Regular Session of the Wisconsin Legislature came to a conclusion. A number of End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin's legislative priorities were enacted; a few others did not make it. Likewise, our coalition successfully opposed several bills that would have negatively impacted survivors in Wisconsin, but a number of concerning bills were signed into law despite our objections. The following is a review of some of the legislative proposals that the End Abuse Policy Team took action on this legislative session.

Bills End Abuse Supported that Became Law

1. **AB 581/SB 476 Change of Venue** – Allows eligible victims who work in, or tangent to, the field of domestic violence advocacy to seek legal remedies outside of the county in which they reside, offering them additional anonymity that makes the process of seeking assistance easier.
2. **AB 451/SB 369 Uniform Canadian Recognition** – Directs Wisconsin courts to recognize and enforce civil domestic violence protection orders issued by Canadian courts.
3. **AB 650/SB 538 Restitution Report Privacy** – Requires the Department of Justice to issue changes the information that it includes in its report to the Department of Administration and the Joint Committee on Finance regarding restitution received by crime victims. Under the bill, the report must specify the total number of individuals who received restitution instead of identifying the individuals who received restitution and must provide the total amount paid to all recipients instead of providing the amount paid to each recipient.
4. **AB 737/SB 623 Out of State DV Repeat Offenders** – Ensures that crimes that would subject a defendant to the increased maximum term of imprisonment include domestic violence felonies or misdemeanors committed in another state but that, had they been committed in Wisconsin, would have been subject to the domestic abuse surcharge.
5. **AB 865/SB 704 Safe at Home Updates** – Implements various changes to the Address Confidentiality Program to provide increased safety for program participants and additional clarity for the Department of Justice regarding its implementation of the program.
6. **Anti-Trafficking Bills** – These bills increase penalties on offenders patronizing prostitutes and children, as well as create a penalty for soliciting and intimate representation of a minor.
 - AB 389/SB 300 – Soliciting a prostitute
 - AB 400/SB 308 – Soliciting a minor
 - AB 486/SB 396 – Soliciting an intimate representation of a minor

Harmful Bills We Opposed that Failed

1. **AB 190/SB 275 Anti-Immigrant Bill**– Prohibits local law enforcement agencies and municipalities from having a stated policy that they will not inquire about immigration status during the course of their work to keep communities safe.
2. **AB 586/SB 474 Contingent Placement**– Allows judges and commissioners to modify placement in contested family law cases based on the occurrence of a possible future event.

3. **AB 849/SB 736 Equal Placement Bill** – Creates a presumption that equal placement is in the best interest of the child in contested family law cases, an extreme departure from current statute which directs courts to focus on the best interest of the child in general.
4. **AB 247/SB 169 Constitutional Carry** – Eliminates the general prohibition against going armed with a concealed weapon without regard to licensure status.
5. **AB 759/SB 637 Rent to Own** – Exempts predatory lenders from Wisconsin consumer protection laws, making it easier for these institutions to prey on vulnerable people like domestic violence victims who have experienced extreme financial control.
6. **AB 530 FoodShare Restrictions** – Creates a pilot program to restrict food stamp use to certain foods designated as having enough nutritional value.

Bills We Opposed That Became Law

1. **AB 88/SB 55 Increased Mandatory Minimums** – Increases automatic penalties for various categories of crimes. End Abuse opposed because of the potential this bill has to increase racial disparity in the criminal justice system’s application of the law.
2. **AB 771/SB 639 Landlord Tenant Changes** – Makes numerous changes to state law regarding rental properties and the way they are managed by landlords for renters. In particular, End Abuse opposed this bill because it limits the number of days courts can stay eviction proceedings while a tenant is applying for Emergency Assistance funds.
3. **AB 710/SB 542 Increased Penalties for Public Benefit Fraud** – This bill increase the penalties that may be incurred on someone who ‘knowingly’ provides false information on a statement regarding their UI benefits, despite the fact that UI fraud is extremely uncommon and people are likely to be charged as knowingly committing fraud even if their error was accidental.
4. **Special Session Bills** – Ten bills were introduced in a special session regarding social safety net programs. Of the ten introduced, End Abuse was officially opposed to six, five of which were passed into law. The five that passed are:
 - a. AB/SB 1 – Increased FSET Hourly Requirement
 - b. AB/SB 2 – Increased Eligibility for FSET Requirements
 - c. AB/SB 3 – Increased Asset Restrictions for Public Benefits
 - d. AB/SB 4 – Employment Screening for Public Housing
 - e. AB/SB 8 – Child Support Compliance for Medicaid Eligibility

Bills We Supported that Did Not Pass

1. **AB 831/SB 734 Teen Dating Violence Prevention Education** – Institutes teen dating violence prevention curricula in all Wisconsin middle and high schools, in addition to requiring that said schools have a stated policy governing their response to dating violence and regularly train staff on that policy.
2. **AB 115/AB 116 Civil Legal Aid Expansion Bills** – Two bills that are aimed at increasing the access of civil legal aid for vulnerable populations in Wisconsin, a service that can be critical for survivors who are often operating in the civil court system pro se.
3. **AB 186/SB 344 Protecting Victims of Child Sex Trafficking Act** – Prohibits law enforcement from charging minors with prostitution, an important step towards recognizing that trafficking survivors are victims and not criminals.

4. **AB 74 48 Hr Waiting Period for Firearm Purchases** – Reinstates the ‘cooling off’ period for firearm purchases, adding an additional level of protection for victims who are far more likely to be killed by their abusers when there is a gun in their home.
5. **AB 597/SB 563 Prohibiting Firearms for Misdemeanor DV Offenders** – Brings Wisconsin law into alignment with federal law by prohibiting a person from possessing a firearm following a conviction, or a finding of not guilty by reason of mental disease or defect, for a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence.
6. **AB 540/SB 444 Trafficking Education** – Implements mandatory trafficking education for all drivers of commercial vehicles to help prevent and stop trafficking.
7. **AB 604 Mandatory Annual Reporting of Statistics** – Requires DOJ to once again publish annual reports with statistics regarding incidences of domestic violence and sexual assault in Wisconsin. DOJ filed these reports through 2012 but stopped for reasons unknown.
8. **AB 286/SB 215 Paid Family Medical Leave Act** – Expands the family and medical leave law to permit an employee covered under that law to take family leave to care for a grandparent, grandchild, or sibling and for the active duty of a family member, lowers the threshold number of employees above which an employer must permit an employee to take family or medical leave, and establishes a family and medical leave insurance program under which certain covered individuals may receive benefits while taking family or medical leave.

Forward!