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TO: Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation, Public Safety, and Veterans and Military Affairs

FROM: Representative André Jacque

DATE: February 27, 2014

RE: Assembly Bill 206

Chairman Petrowski and Committee Members:

Thank you for holding this hearing on Assembly Bill 206, which Sen. Lazich and I have proposed to authorize a "Choose Life" specialty license plate and provide another option for Wisconsinites to showcase their support and raise funds for non-profit, volunteer driven Wisconsin pregnancy care centers which provide vital services for women and their families. This idea was first proposed to me late last session by a number of constituents after the legislature's bi-partisan passage of a resolution honoring pregnancy centers and designating October 2013 as Pregnancy Care Month. As you know, there are a number of other specialty license plates in Wisconsin, including those that celebrate and recognize the University System, Endangered Resources, Celebrate Children, the Green Bay Packers, Ducks Unlimited, Golf Wisconsin, Wisconsin Women Health Foundation, Donate Life Wisconsin, the Milwaukee Brewers, and the Lions Club. I am confident, however, that based on the enthusiastic support I have received, and the proven track record of similar plates in many other states, that "Choose Life" plates would soon be among the most popular designs in Wisconsin.

State-authorized "Choose Life" plates are currently available to residents in 29 states including Iowa, Indiana and Ohio and have proven to be very popular with the public, raising over \$19 Million for worthy charitable organizations since they first became available in Florida in 2000. As amended and passed by the Assembly, AB206 effectively requires contributions first be paid to the state to fully fund the pre-production of the Choose Life plates before those activities can begin. I believe this change is an improvement to the bill and an important precedent for specialty plates to ensure that there is no financial exposure for the state if sufficient funds are not raised. Over 830,000 Choose Life plates have been sold nationwide and feedback on current demand for them in Wisconsin indicates that there will be no problem or issue with selling the amount necessary to repay Choose Life Wisconsin for funding the production upfront, which they have indicated a willingness to do.

According to the amendment, the Department of Transportation will not issue or begin development work on "Choose Life" plates until it receives contributions totaling the lesser of \$23,700 or DOT's final estimate of its initial costs of production of the plates. Special plate development costs are funded from DOT's appropriation for gifts and donations, rather than DOT's appropriation for DMV operations. When DOT receives contributions totaling the amount of its final estimate or \$23,700 (whichever is less) it will commence and complete development work on these plates within one year. When DOT begins issuing these "Choose Life" special plates, the full amount of the annual \$25 payment is directed to Choose Life Wisconsin.

Again, thank you for hearing Assembly Bill 206.



WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

TESTIMONY ON ASSEMBLY BILL 206: “CHOOSE LIFE” LICENSE PLATES

Presented to the Senate Transportation, Public Safety,
and Veterans and Military Affairs Committee

By Barbara Sella, Associate Director

February 27, 2014

The Wisconsin Catholic Conference (WCC) supports Assembly Bill 206, which would permit Wisconsin residents to obtain special license plates with the words “Choose Life.” The proceeds from the sale of these plates would support the state’s pregnancy care centers.

Wisconsin already has a “Celebrate Children” license plate, which raises money for early childhood development; a “Donate Life” plate, which promotes life-saving organ donation; and a Wisconsin Women’s Health Foundation plate, which promotes education and community-based health programs for women and children.

The “Choose Life” plate would likewise help women and children in our state by making more resources available to them. Pregnancy help centers provide a range of services depending on their focus, but all are committed to empowering women who choose life for their children.

Just as the Catholic Church advances the dignity of each human person by advocating on behalf of the hungry, the homeless, the uninsured, the migrant, so too she supports assisting pregnant and parenting women who face day-to-day challenges securing clothing, diapers, formula, cribs, car seats, etc. for their children.

We therefore urge you to support this bill.

**Testimony in Support of Assembly Bill 206
Senate Committee on Transportation
Julaine K. Appling, President, Choose Life Wisconsin, Inc.
February 27, 2014**

Thank you, Chairman Petrowski and committee members, for the opportunity to testify today in support of Assembly Bill (AB) 206, legislation establishing a “Choose Life” Wisconsin specialty license plate. I am Julaine Appling, president of Choose Life Wisconsin, Inc., a non-stock, not-for-profit Wisconsin corporation organized as a public interest educational and charitable organization as defined in § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Choose Life Wisconsin’s application for recognition as an exempt organization is pending with the Internal Revenue Service.

Assembly Bill 206 authorizes the creation of a specialty license plate that bears the words “Choose Life” and an appropriate, appealing image. We are very proud of the “Choose-Life” Wisconsin plate design sporting our state’s signature red, white, and black colors, an image of a baby’s ink footprint, and the positive “Choose Life” message. Choose Life Wisconsin, Inc. will disburse the proceeds from the sale of the plates to pregnancy care centers throughout the state.

The “Choose Life” plate will provide a wonderful opportunity for Wisconsinites to express their support for women facing difficult choices. It will facilitate and encourage adoption as a positive, life-affirming choice for women with unplanned pregnancies. Very importantly, it will also, at no cost to Wisconsin taxpayers, help fund the women’s support network of Pregnancy Resource Centers that provide food and basic necessities such as formula, diapers and clothing; comfortable, protective residential facilities; emotional and financial support; and childcare, work, and life skills for economically disadvantaged Wisconsin mothers who want the same choices to protect and nurture their children as other mothers in our state who have access to adequate resources. And, just as importantly, it will assist in providing women’s health screening and referral networks to ensure reproductive health for needy and at risk mothers and infants.

In addition to the regular vehicle registration fee, those who purchase the plate are required to pay a \$15 fee for issuance or reissuance of the special plates and a \$25 annual fee that provides funds to Choose Life Wisconsin, Inc. Initial funds will cover Department of Transportation (DOT) costs of plate production, and thereafter all funds will be distributed to pregnancy care centers. Assembly Bill 206 requires receipt of contributions for plate production prior to plate development. Choose Life Wisconsin is prepared to contribute the total cost of plate production in one up-front, lump-sum payment so that contributions can be immediately distributed to pregnancy care centers.

Beginning with Florida in 2000, twenty-nine states have established “Choose Life” license plates raising over \$17 million for adoption assistance. Choose Life Wisconsin would like to see

Wisconsin be the 30th state (and the 8th Midwestern state following Iowa, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, North and South Dakota) to produce and sell a "Choose Life" license plate. Over 830,000 "Choose Life" plates have sold nationwide. We have experienced increasing demand for a "Choose Life" license plate in Wisconsin over the last five years. We are confident that the plate will sell quickly..

Assembly Bill 206 has been carefully worded to avoid conflict with Senate Joint Resolution 4, the constitutional amendment creating a transportation fund "lockbox." All moneys received in excess of the DOT plate production costs will be deposited into the general fund, not the transportation fund. The bill has no long-range fiscal impact to the state.

To clarify why Choose Life Wisconsin is seeking legislative approval for this plate, it is important to know that when we began this effort we were hopeful that we would be able to utilize the administrative option. However, as we delved more deeply into the pertinent statutes and codes, it became clear that state law requires that we pursue the legislative route for a fundraising plate.

Excitement about this license plate is running high among Wisconsin citizens. Any time we have mentioned the plate on social media or in public events we have received unsolicited comments such as, "Finally," "It's about time," and my personal favorite, "Yikes! I was determined my next license plate would be the Packers plate, but this plate makes my decision very hard." Given the enthusiasm across the state, we look forward to promoting the sale of these plates to private citizens who want to pay the additional fee.

The legislature has already approved specialty fund-raising plates for the Wisconsin Women's Health Foundation. In a time when we hear so much about the war on women, this committee and the senate should not refuse Wisconsin citizens the opportunity, at no cost to taxpayers, to contribute yet another voice and greater financial resources to promote women's health and provide desperately needed emotional and financial support for the neediest among us - at risk mothers and infants - so that they too can have the same choices as other mothers and infants in our state to lead full and productive lives.

We urge committee members to support AB 206 and move it to the full Senate. Thank you for your consideration of this long-awaited legislation. I am happy to answer any questions committee members may have.

Programs/Services Offered by One WI Pregnancy Resource Center (Taken from the Center's web site; Center's name redacted)

- **MEDICAL SERVICES**
 - Pregnancy Tests
 - Ultrasound
 - STI/STD Testing

- **BE INFORMED**
 - Signs of Pregnancy
 - Fetal Development
 - Consider Your Choices
 - Parenting Info
 - Adoption Info
 - Abortion Info
 - Abortion Procedures Info
 - Abortion Risks Info
 - Morning After Pill
 - Rape
 - Sexually Transmitted Infections
 - Healthy Relationships and Sexual Decision Making

- **SUPPORT PROGRAMS**
 - Pregnancy and Parenting Education
 - Pregnancy & Infant Care
 - Childbirth Education
 - Parenting Toddlers & Beyond
 - Care Net's Residential Program
 - Program Support
 - Parenting & Relationship Education
 - What Former Residents Are Saying
 - LifeWise For Educators
 - Abortion Recovery Support
 - One Woman's Story
 - Post Abortion Stress

- **FOR MEN**
 - Meet One-on-One
 - 24:7 Dad
 - Abortion Recovery Services for Men

_____ 's RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM

_____ 's residential program, _____, supports pregnant single mothers ages 18-26. For six to nine months, we provide a safe and secure environment for mothers to become emotionally healthy and self-sufficient members of the community, while building life skills that will enable each young mom to secure employment, housing, manage money and foster sound decision making while learning effective parenting skills.

(over)

Individualized Program Support Areas

1. **Money management** – learn how to make a budget, balance a check book, and make your dollars stretch by learning the difference between wants and needs.
2. **Nutrition Education** – learn how to make healthy balanced meals for yourself and your child and how to make meal time fun for your growing baby.
3. **Child Birth Education**
4. **Infant CPR** – become prepared to save your child's life in case of an emergency
5. **Spiritual Growth** – Christ is the foundation of _____'s program. Learn what the Word of God has to say about community living and everyday life experiences.
6. **Parenting Education** – Learn how to maintain your physical and emotional health, and ways to promote your baby's overall development through daily care routines, toys and books, and building a trusting relationship. Meet with a Social Worker each week and learn what to look for in developmental milestones.
7. **Relationship Education** – Learn how to stop relationship instability and have a healthy relationship. *"I don't know where I'd be without _____. I was able to sit down and analyze what I was going to do in life and how I was going to take care of me and my baby."* Former resident of _____

○ **WISCONSIN** ○



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○ **Choose Life!** ○