



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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“ETHAN’S LAW” HEADS TO GOVERNOR’S DESK

State Assembly gives final passage to Jacque-Tittl proposal honoring the memory of Ethan Hauschultz by protecting children at risk from dangerous placements

MADISON... Children in protective care would no longer be placed with admitted child abusers under “Ethan’s Law,” which cleared the State Assembly today in a unanimous voice vote and is on its way to the Governor’s desk.

State Sen. André Jacque (R-De Pere), and State Rep. Paul Tittl (R-Manitowoc), said their bill closes loopholes in state law which led to the brutal death of Ethan Hauschultz, a seven-year-old Manitowoc boy. Ethan suffered a deadly pattern of cruel abuse at the home. County workers lawfully placed him in this home despite a lengthy record of violence by his designated ‘caregiver’.

“What happened to Ethan is unbelievably tragic,” Sen. Jacque said. “If the loopholes didn’t exist, Ethan and his two siblings could not have been placed in this home, and presumably Ethan would still be alive today. The system failed him, and we owe it to his memory to put proper guidelines in place.”

Due to neglect in their home, the children were placed with a great uncle who had been found guilty of felony child abuse in 2009, among several other violent past offenses. But because of a plea bargain, his record showed the conviction as disorderly conduct, a non-violent misdemeanor.

Under the Jacque-Tittl bill, human services workers could not place a child with any adult who had been found guilty of abusing a child, entered a plea of “no contest” to a child-abuse charge, or plea-bargained that crime down to a lesser offense.

“This bill will bring some justice to the terrible suffering Ethan Hauschultz underwent that led to his death, and protect children in the future,” said Rep. Tittl.

“Red flags were everywhere - this gap in the law basically took Ethan’s life,” Sen. Jacque said. “This bill will protect children by setting a clear standard for Child Protective Services to avoid removing children from a dangerous situation only to put them immediately back in harm’s way.”

Rep. Tittl and Sen. Jacque called on Gov. Evers to sign Ethan’s Law (Assembly Bill 26/Senate Bill 24) as soon as possible.

“Ethan’s senseless, preventable murder highlights the vulnerability of our children and demands this statutory change,” Sen. Jacque said.

“This new law will safeguard a child’s welfare when the adults who are supposed to fail to do so,” Rep. Tittl said.

The bipartisan measure passed 12-0 in the Assembly Committee on Children and Families and 5-0 in the Senate Committee on Human Services, Children and Families.

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