

Wednesday Noon Live April 2021
Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin



Wednesday Noon Live

Our April focus is on Raise the Age in the Wisconsin State Budget. LOPPW supports funding to return 17-year-old youth to the juvenile justice system. Our program includes a personal testimony from Ramiah Whiteside, a Milwaukee resident who was directly impacted by being tried in an adult court at age 17. Ramiah is now a Community Organizer for EXPO (Ex-Incarcerated People Organizing).

We also discuss our other priorities reflected in the budget.

[April Wednesday Noon Live Program](#)

[Raise the Age Action Alert](#)

[Wisconsin Voting Rights Action Alert](#)

[Written Version of Wednesday Noon Live](#)

Wisconsin State Budget: In Wisconsin, we're in a period of focusing on the State Budget. The joint finance committee is meeting four times in April for public hearings. We are not encouraging people to attend the in-person meetings; it's up to each person. Whether you participate in one of the hearings or not, now is a good time to lift our voices to our legislators.

Raise the Age: One of our budget priorities is including money to support moving 17-year-old youth back into the juvenile justice system.

Testimony: The video testimony is from Ramiah Whiteside, a Milwaukee resident who was directly impacted by being tried in an adult court at age 17. Ramiah is now a Community Organizer for EXPO (Ex-Incarcerated People Organizing).

Ramiah was tried for the possession of marijuana, and then sent to an adult prison. He says he feels blessed to be a part of the solutions to a problem of throwing away of our young people into a system that hurts rather than helps.

LOPPW's history with Raise the Age: LOPPW worked on returning 17-year-old youth to the juvenile justice system several years ago. We had the original author, Republican Senator Jerry Petrowski, at one of our council retreats to speak. And then it didn't pass and went on the back burner. Now with our Hunger Advocacy Fellow, Kyle Minden, we've moved forward with some renewed efforts.

Interview with Hunger Advocacy Fellow Kyle Minden (on video only)

LOPPW's Priorities in the Wisconsin State Budget

1. *Juvenile Justice - Raise the Age*

Support sufficient appropriation to reimburse counties for the increased costs associated with raising the age

that a circuit court or municipal court exercises adult court jurisdiction on individuals from 17 years of age to 18 years of age.

2. *Anti-Sex Trafficking, Poverty*, and other contributing factors to sex trafficking:

Support the funding Wisconsin Department of Children and Families requested to distribute to counties for youth services including the following:

1. Preventing sex trafficking of children and youth.
2. Providing treatment and services for documented and suspected victims of child and youth sex trafficking.
3. Increasing youth access to housing.
4. Preventing and reducing the incidence of youth alcohol and other drug use and abuse.

3. Health and Poverty

Support accepting Federal Dollars to Expand BadgerCare (Medicaid). Medicaid expansion reduces the fiscal burden associated with healthcare costs for many more Wisconsin residents and unites Wisconsin with 38 other states that provide free healthcare for the nation's impoverished.

4. Immigration

Support extending eligibility to receive driver's licenses and identification cards to undocumented persons residing in Wisconsin if they comply with the driver knowledge and skills requirement applicable to other individuals or identification card requirements.

5. Care for God's Creation

- Energy Efficiency and Resiliency
- Renewable Energy and Jobs
- Equity and
- Farmers and land conservation

Joint Finance Committee Public Hearings: The hearing schedule includes the following four hearings, all from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.:

- Friday, April 9, 2021 UW-Whitewater, Whitewater, WI
- Wednesday, April 21, 2021 The Hodag Dome, Rhinelander, WI
- Thursday, April 22, 2021 UW-Stout, Menomonie, WI
- Wednesday, April 28, 2021 Virtual

Public Comments and Additional Information: <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/topics/budgetcomments/submit-comments/>

Action Alerts: For current action alerts from LOPPW and our D.C. office, go to our website under the Action Center at the far right on the top of the Home Page.

May Wednesday Noon Live: Next month, please join us when we'll be back on the first Wednesday, May 5.

Thank you for taking time with us.

Blessings,

Team LOPPW