

# Child labor permits bill passes Senate, heads to gov's desk

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A bill that would eliminate the requirement that minors aged 16 or 17 obtain a child work permit passed the Senate today on a 20-12 party-line vote, sending it to Gov. Scott Walker's desk.

But Dems protested the bill would have negative effects on students and prioritizes labor and industries over children.

Sen. LaTonya Johnson, D-Milwaukee, said the legislation "takes advantage of our most vulnerable, especially our poor and low income kids" and will lead to increased truancy among high school students.

And Senate Minority Leader Jennifer Shilling, D-La Crosse, said "the idea of prioritizing cheap labor over positive outcomes for at-risk youth is troubling for me."

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Meanwhile, Sen. Janet Bewley said the bill would inhibit a parent's ability to be involved in his or her child's life.

"What we are doing is we are quietly and softly loosening those abilities that we have to get our arms around children and protect them," said Bewley, D-Ashland.

Dems also proposed a series of amendments to the bill, all of which were shot down on party-line votes.

Sen. Chris Larson, D-Milwaukee, was absent from the chamber today.