

Rep. Loudenbeck: Teen employment act passes Assembly

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Madison - The Wisconsin State Assembly voted 64-34 to pass Assembly Bill 25 (AB 25) authored by Rep. Amy Loudenbeck (R-Clinton). AB 25 will remove one of the barriers to employment that unaccompanied and homeless teens face by lowering the age requirement for a work permit to under 16 years of age.

AB 25 is the first of a series of initiatives Rep. Loudenbeck plans to work on this session to improve access to employment and other daily living supports for unaccompanied and homeless youth.

“Unaccompanied and homeless youth are vulnerable to human trafficking, exploitation, and abuse. Often disconnected from family and friends, homeless youth are particularly susceptible to traffickers who will lure them with the promise of food, warmth, and even false love,” said Rep. Loudenbeck. “Providing these young people with an opportunity for legal, gainful employment so they can complete their education and become self-supporting adults will reduce their risk for negative outcomes.”

Under current law, a minor must obtain a work permit prior to employment. The process of obtaining a work permit includes providing a signed letter or letters from the employer and the parent or guardian. This creates a significant challenge for unaccompanied and homeless teens seeking a way to legally earn money to pay for personal and living expenses. Eliminating the work permit requirement for 16 and 17 years olds will eliminate an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy for all teens. All current state and federal laws related to hours and times of day a minor may work,

and restricted or prohibited employment for minors are not being changed.

Wisconsin is currently one of just 15 states that require a work permit for residents under the age of 18. There are currently 18 states that have similar age requirements including Minnesota, Iowa, and Illinois.

The bill is available for scheduling in the Senate.

For more information on the bill, or to track it's progress, click here:

<http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2017/proposals/reg/asm/bill/ab25>