

# Rep. Snyder: Snyder authors, JFC approves budget motion supporting child welfare

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**Madison...** The Joint Committee on Finance (JFC) approved a budget motion, authored by Representative Pat Snyder (R-Schofield), which will increase funding for child welfare services in Wisconsin by \$25.5 million annually. The increase is intended to help counties, who administer child protective services, with the cost of caring for abused and neglected children. Following passage of the motion, Rep. Snyder made this statement:

“I am so pleased that my colleagues on the Joint Committee on Finance agreed that this is a priority. Abused and neglected children are among our most vulnerable citizens, and this legislation helps provide the critical services that allow them to return to normalcy and permanency.”

The motion comes at a time when the number of children in out-of-home care is higher due to the opioid epidemic. According to the Wisconsin Counties Association, there was a 39% increase in children in out-of-home care between 2012 and 2018, and 80% of cases are caused or complicated by drug or alcohol abuse. Additionally, cases involving substance abuse tend to be more complex and result in more lengthy placements in out-of-home care. Between 2011 and 2016 the average length of time in out-of-home care increased by 127%.

“I have heard from constituents, county officials, and many others while I was co-chair of the Speaker’s Task Force of Foster Care that our child welfare system is in crisis,” Rep. Snyder added. “Caseloads are enormous, causing high burnout and turnover rates, which delays and prevents children from receiving critical services. This funding will help ease the financial burden that county social services are

facing, and produce better outcomes for our kids and families.”

The funding will go through the Children and Family Allocation and may be used for child abuse and neglect services, community-based juvenile delinquency-related services, and other children and families related services, not including juvenile justice.