

# Rep. Novak: Bill to educate students on safe haven laws signed into law

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MADISON - A bill to add the teaching of Wisconsin's Safe Haven laws for health classes in schools authored by Rep. Todd Novak (Dodgeville) and State Sen. Joan Ballweg (Markesan) has been signed into law as 2021 Wisconsin Act 90 by Governor Evers.

"I am glad to see the Governor take action on this proposal. Over the course of the year, I've worked with members of the community on this idea. I want to thank everyone that helped during the process to help move this proposal forward, especially to Bobbie Thomas of Monroe. Bobbie took the time to travel to Madison on two separate occasions to testify in favor of the bill."

Rep. Novak worked with members of the Green County Abuse Prevention Team and Green County District Attorney Craig Nolen when formulating this bill following a tragic incident this past winter.

"This bill stems from a tragedy involving a newborn baby, Harper, who was found murdered earlier this year in Green County." said Novak. "Wisconsin Act 90 will make a real difference by increasing awareness of Safe Haven laws for young people who may be experiencing a crisis."

Wisconsin's Safe Haven laws allow newborn children to be relinquished to police officers, emergency responders, and hospital workers without legal consequence if the child is less than 72 hours old. Once the child has been relinquished an adoption can be facilitated. Under Wisconsin Act 90, there will be an educational component incorporated into health classes to ensure individuals are taught about the current law.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and many education groups including the Association of Wisconsin School Administrators, Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance, Wisconsin Association of School Boards, Wisconsin Association of School Business Officials, Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators, Wisconsin Association of School Personnel Administrators, and the Wisconsin Council for Administrators of Special Services supported the bill throughout the legislative process.