

Sen. Jacque: Bill protecting vulnerable people signed by governor

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MADISON, WI... The most vulnerable members of our society will receive stronger protections under State Sen. André Jacque's (R-De Pere) legislation signed into law by Gov. Evers today.

Sen. Jacque said the measure ([Assembly Bill 100](#)/Senate Bill 92), co-authored with Rep. Shannon Zimmerman (R-River Falls), requires training for guardians of incapacitated adults, an initiative supported by state advocacy groups including the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities and Disability Rights Wisconsin.

"Guardianship is designed to protect individuals who are unable to care for themselves due to infancy, incapacity or disability," Sen. Jacque said. "This measure will ensure that individuals petitioning for guardianship have basic training about the roles and responsibilities of guardians under state statute, and best practice strategies."

Sen. Jacque said that, on the spectrum of delegation of decision-making by an adult, guardianship is the most restrictive and comprehensive in comparison to the alternatives, such as power of attorney. Yet many family members and volunteers who become a guardian do not fully understand what a guardian's role, responsibilities, and administrative duties are under Wisconsin law prior to being appointed.

“Frequently guardians feel overwhelmed, unprepared, isolated, and unsupported,” Sen. Jacque said. “Wisconsin’s Guardianship Support Center (GSC) annually fields approximately 1,800 phone calls and e-mail requests and conduct about 35 in-person trainings across the state.”

Unfortunately, Sen. Jacque said, lack of training can result in guardians making decisions that are contrary to the spirit of Wisconsin’s limited guardianship system, and in some cases making decisions for their ward that go beyond what the courts have authorized.

“The new law will ensure that individuals petitioning for guardianship have basic training about the roles and responsibilities of guardians under state statute and best practice strategies to ensure the wishes and preferences of the ward are understood and honored in the decision-making process before they are appointed,” Sen. Jacque said.

Under this initiative, free online training, that current and prospective guardians may access at any time, will be developed, along with increased technical assistance, in-person training, and support to prospective guardians, guardians, and families.

“As a society, we need to fortify the systems we rely on to care for our most vulnerable members,” Sen. Jacque said. “This new law enhances our guardian protections by requiring practices that will help ensure safe, fulfilling lives for the defenseless ones among us.”

Senator André Jacque represents Northeast Wisconsin’s First Senate District, consisting of Door and Kewaunee Counties and portions of Brown, Calumet, Manitowoc, and Outagamie counties.