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Rep. Loudenbeck: Loudenbeck bills pass Assembly

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Madison- Today, the Wisconsin State Assembly passed several bills authored by Rep. Amy Loudenbeck (R-Clinton).

Senate Bill 332, co-authored with Sen. Mary Felzkowski (R-Irma), expands the allowable work hours for 14 and 15 year olds to between 6:00 a.m. and 9:30 p.m. on a day preceding a school day, and between 6:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. on a day preceding a non-school day, as long as the employer and employee are not covered by the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

For example, a mini-golf course that hires young workers may be open until 10 pm during the busy summer tourism season. However, the law currently stipulates 14-15 year olds cannot work beyond 9 pm during the summer and 7 pm during the school year, requiring the employer to hire additional adult staff on hand just to close out the last business hour. If an establishment cannot find someone to work those hours, they may have to close early.

“The bill is intended to help very small businesses which may or may not be seasonal, to better align their hours of operation with the hours that 14-15 year olds are allowed to work,” said Loudenbeck. “It is important to know there are numerous protections for 14-15 year old workers under current state and federal law and they remain in place.”

SB 332 has passed both chambers and heads to the governor for final action.

Senate Bill 491, co-authored with Sen. Kathy Bernier (R-Lake Hallie) changes the payment structure for subsidized guardianship placements by having the state pay for the program instead of the individual counties.

“Guardianship is one of three legal permanency options for children placed in out-of-home care, along with reunification and adoption,” said Loudenbeck. “A subsidized guardian is responsible for the child and able to consent for the child’s every day events such as school activities, health care needs, and family vacations.”

Under subsidized guardianship, it is possible for a relative, a person who is like-kin, or a foster parent (in certain circumstances) to become the permanent legal guardian and receive a monthly payment. The payment amount is based on the Foster Care Rate Setting Policy. The rate can be the same or less than the final foster care payment for the child, but it cannot be more. Payments generally continue until a child reaches the age of 18 and the child continues to receive medical coverage through Medicaid (Title XIX).

SB 491 received bipartisan support and is available for scheduling in the Senate for concurrence.