

Maggie Koch: Proposed stillbirth tax credit offers support for grieving families

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MADISON, WI — Wisconsin legislators are poised to pass a landmark bipartisan bill, Stillbirth Recognition and Support Act, that would create a state income tax credit for parents who experience the trauma and heartbreak of stillbirth.

Every year in Wisconsin, more than 300 families suffer the devastation of stillbirth. Profound grief is often accompanied by medical bills, funeral costs, and time away from work.

Senate Bill 379/ Assembly Bill 373 would establish a \$2,000 refundable individual income tax credit for parents whose child is stillborn. Stillbirth refers to the loss of a baby beginning at 20 weeks and up to the time of delivery. This credit is intended to help offset the medical, funeral, counseling, and related financial burdens parents often face after losing a child.

“While no policy can remove the pain of losing a child, acknowledging that loss and offering tangible support can make a meaningful difference to grieving families,” said Senator André Jacque, co-sponsor of the legislation.

Green Bay resident Maggie Koch (pronounced cook) experienced a stillbirth 6 years ago with the loss of her daughter Olivia, at 39 weeks and 5 days old. While her family would not benefit from this bill, she knows it will support families across the state who have yet to experience stillbirth.

“This bill makes me feel seen and my daughter Olivia’s life recognized,” said Koch. “What people might not realize is that stillbirth carries many of the same costs as a

live birth — delivery expenses, healthcare visits, specialist referrals — but with compounding grief and empty arms. That experience ignited my passion to advocate for families who deserve recognition and support during one of the most difficult moments of their lives.”

SB 379 / AB 373 has garnered broad bipartisan support from lawmakers across Wisconsin. Lawmakers emphasize that while this credit cannot erase grief, it provides meaningful statutory recognition to parents who have lost a child to stillbirth and helps ease the financial burden that often compounds trauma.

“We’ve heard emotionally devastating stories from parents who have suffered stillbirth,” sponsors note. “Now is the time to pass this legislation and support families through both acknowledgment and action.” (Representative Lindee Brill, co-sponsor of this legislation)

The bill recently passed the Assembly and is awaiting a vote in the Senate before heading to the governor’s desk. If signed, it would create one of the first state-level supports of its kind in Wisconsin.

For parents, families, and advocates interested in learning more additional resources can be found here [Stillbirth Tax Information](#) | Star Legacy Foundation.