



**JIM STEINEKE** MAJORITY LEADER

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 5<sup>th</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

(608) 266-2401  
Toll-Free: (888) 534-0005  
Rep.Steineke@legis.wi.gov

P.O. Box 8953  
Madison, WI 53708-8953

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Rep. Jim Steineke**

**February 28, 2020**  
**(608) 266-2418**

## **Local Advocate Influences Changes to Minor Guardianship Laws**

**MADISON** – A bill brought forward by the Legislative Council Study Committee on Minor Guardianships, Assembly Bill 47, was signed into law today, marking a turning point for children, families, and guardians working within Wisconsin’s minor guardianship laws. The bill was championed by the Chair of the committee, Representative Jim Steineke (R-Kaukauna), after a constituent from his district brought the issue to his attention.

In 2018, Jessica was a guardian to her niece, and current Wisconsin laws and statutes meant this child could be put back into an abusive and neglectful situation. Jessica took her concerns to Rep. Steineke, hoping he could help. That conversation set in motion a domino effect, beginning with the formation of the Legislative Council Study Committee in 2018, and ending today with AB 47 being signed into law.

“Jessica is a testament to the power of one person with a cause, who is committed to putting in the work to find a solution,” said Rep. Steineke. “We owe it to kids like Jessica’s niece to make sure we as a state are doing all we can to ensure they have a safe and stable family environment.”

The legislation was a true bipartisan effort, beginning with Rep. Steineke as the Chair and Senator Latonya Johnson (D-Milwaukee) as the Vice-Chair of the study committee. Jessica showed up to numerous meetings and public hearings to share her story, helping move the bill through the process. Ultimately, it passed through both the Assembly and Senate with unanimous support.

“I am incredibly proud to represent someone like Jessica and her family, who have such huge hearts and want to make a difference, not only for their niece, but for other families and children around the state who may also be struggling with our current laws,” continued Rep. Steineke. “With Governor Evers’ signature today, we are taking steps to ensure that the best interest of the child is always considered when making decisions for children in Wisconsin.”

###