



WSLC WOMEN'S STATE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL *OF UTAH*

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF H.B. 432

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Amendments (Representative A. Loubet, Sponsor)

Whereas, A clergy member with knowledge of child abuse disclosed in a confessional setting is currently exempted from reporting the situation due to concerns that any such disclosure violates church doctrine and policy or canon law;

Whereas, H.B. 432 would allow clergy the option to report ongoing child abuse or neglect in the interest of preventing further abuse even when the abuse is disclosed within a confessional setting;

Whereas, 50 US states and 2 territories reported 558,899 victims of child abuse and neglect during 2022 and this national rate of 7.7 victims per 1000 children reflects an increase over prior years¹;

Whereas, Utah had 38,494 cases of child abuse reported in 2022; 9,695 cases were confirmed²;

Whereas family values are core Utah values that are held across the aisle and are always centered on protection of the most vulnerable members of our families; and;

Whereas, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and the Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City have told media they will not oppose H.B. 432, after years of opposing similar legislation³; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Women's State Legislative Council supports H.B. 432 in its current form.

Dated this 14th Day of February, 2024

Donna Murphy RN MSN CPN

Donna Murphy RN MSN CPN, President
Women's State Legislative Council

Brandy Farmer

Brandy Farmer
WSLC Judiciary Study Committee

Wendy Garvin

Wendy Garvin, Director
WSLC Business & Labor Study Committee

Shawna Scott-Bellacomo

Shawna Scott-Bellacomo, Director
WSLC Judiciary Study Committee

¹ <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/cm2022.pdf> Department of Health and Human Services 2022 Child Maltreatment report

² <https://cjslc.org/blog?post=2022-child-abuse-stats> Friends of the Child Justice Center statistics of child abuse

³ <https://www.fox13now.com/news/politics/utah-faiths-say-they-wont-oppose-clergy-abuse-reporting-bill> Utah faiths say they will not oppose child reporting bill