



Speaker's Task Force on  
**Foster Care**

Representative Patrick Snyder, Co-Chair  
85<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

## Committee Background

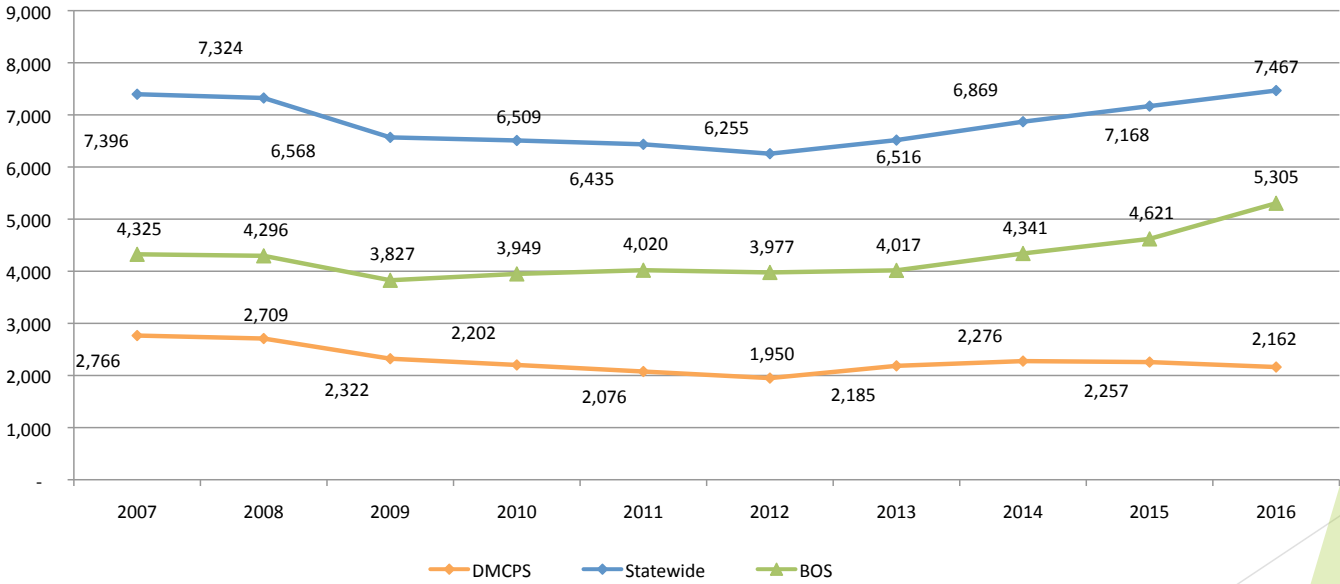
- Late June, Speaker Vos announced the formation of the Speaker's Task Force on Foster Care
- 13 members, bipartisan committee
  - Co-chairs, Patrick Snyder (Schofield) Steve Doyle (Onalaska)

*“Tasked with developing ideas to improve the child welfare system that provides out-of-home care for more than seven thousand children in Wisconsin”*

*-Assembly Speaker Robin Vos, Racine*

# The Need...

## Children in Out-of-Home Care, 2007-2016



## Number of children entering foster care increases in Wisconsin, more foster parents needed statewide

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Posted: May 22, 2016 10:28 PM CDT

**Colfax (WQOW)** - Wisconsin saw an increase in children entering foster care compared to 2015, but social workers said the number of families opening their doors is on the decline.

According to Ignite My Cause, Wisconsin has 7,000 children in foster care statewide, and each month 350-400 children are removed from their birth parents because of neglect or abuse. The Sarauer family has opened their home for these children for the past three years.



## Across Wisconsin, a steep increase in kids separated from addict parents

Chris Mueller and Keegan Kyle, USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin Published 7:45 a.m. CT July 13, 2017 | Updated 3:24 p.m. CT July 16, 2017



## Wisconsin Faces a Shortage of Foster Families

By BONNIE PETRIE • JUN 20, 2016

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Foster parents Jessica and Marc Benzakein at the Coalition for Children, Youth, and Families in Milwaukee.  
BONNIE PETRIE





### Employment:

Over half of 19 and 21 year olds who age out of care are unemployed.

### Homelessness:

25% of 19 year olds and 35% of 21 year olds who age out of care reported being homeless in the two years.



### Incarceration:

Roughly 30% of 19 and 21 year olds who age out of foster are reported having been incarcerated in the past two years.

## Committee Work

Over 600 miles, making stops in 6 different communities

Madison: July 27, 2017

Wausau: August 23, 2017

Dodgeville: September 20, 2017

La Crosse: September 28, 2017

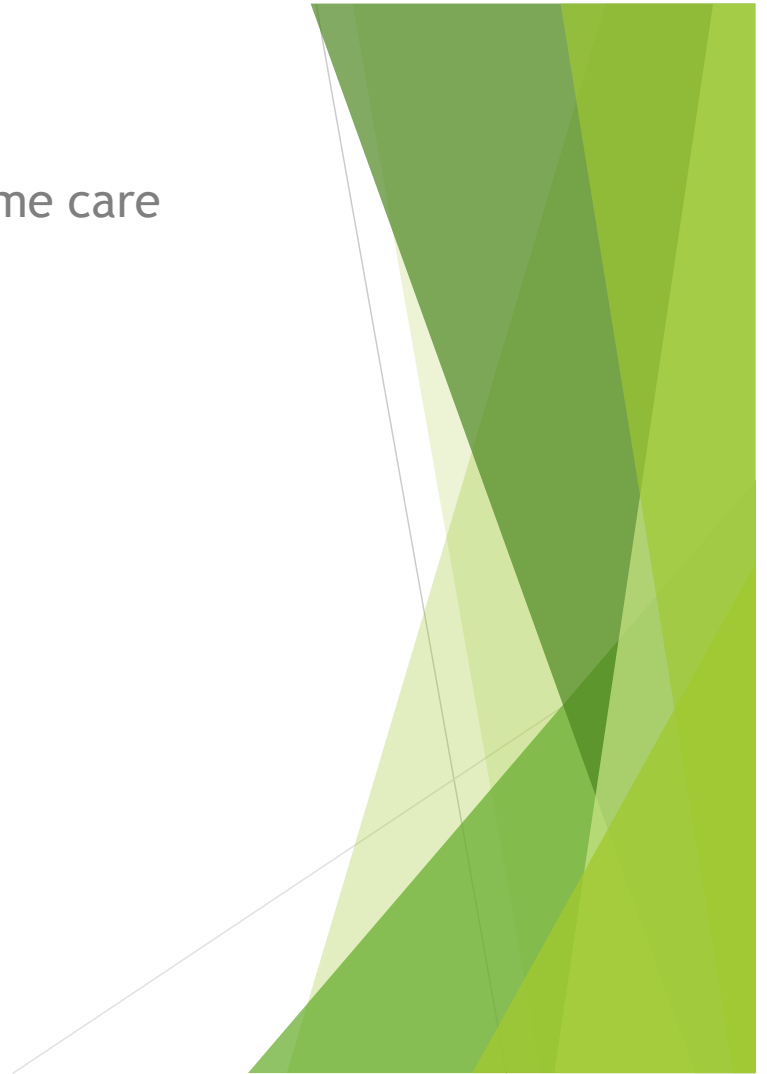
Milwaukee: October 11, 2017

Green Bay: October 25, 2017



## Who did we hear from?

- Children who have been placed in out-of-home care
- Foster Parents
- Biological Parents
- County Caseworkers
- County Human Service Directors
- Child Welfare Managers
- Judges
- Corporation Counsels
- Attorneys
- Teachers
- Advocates







***Foster Forward***



# *Foster Forward*

13 bipartisan proposals

Crafted with the input we received over past 6 months

Held press conference, introduced for co-sponsorship

## Focused on the key areas:

Efforts to support families, to reduce contact with the child welfare system, and to prevent the removal of children from their homes.

Improvements to the child welfare system, broadly, including support for child welfare agencies, caseworkers, and foster parents.

Provision of services and resources to children who are placed in out-of-home care, both during placement and, for those children who age out of the system, after placement.

# Prevention

\$1M in grants to expand and improve the resources and services available to families to prevent them from coming into contact with the child welfare system

- Eligible Grantees: *Counties, Non-Profit Organizations, and Tribes*
- Eligible Purposes: *Innovative Practices, Home Visiting, Community Response Program, etc.*

Restore funding to United Way 2-1-1- Wisconsin, Inc.

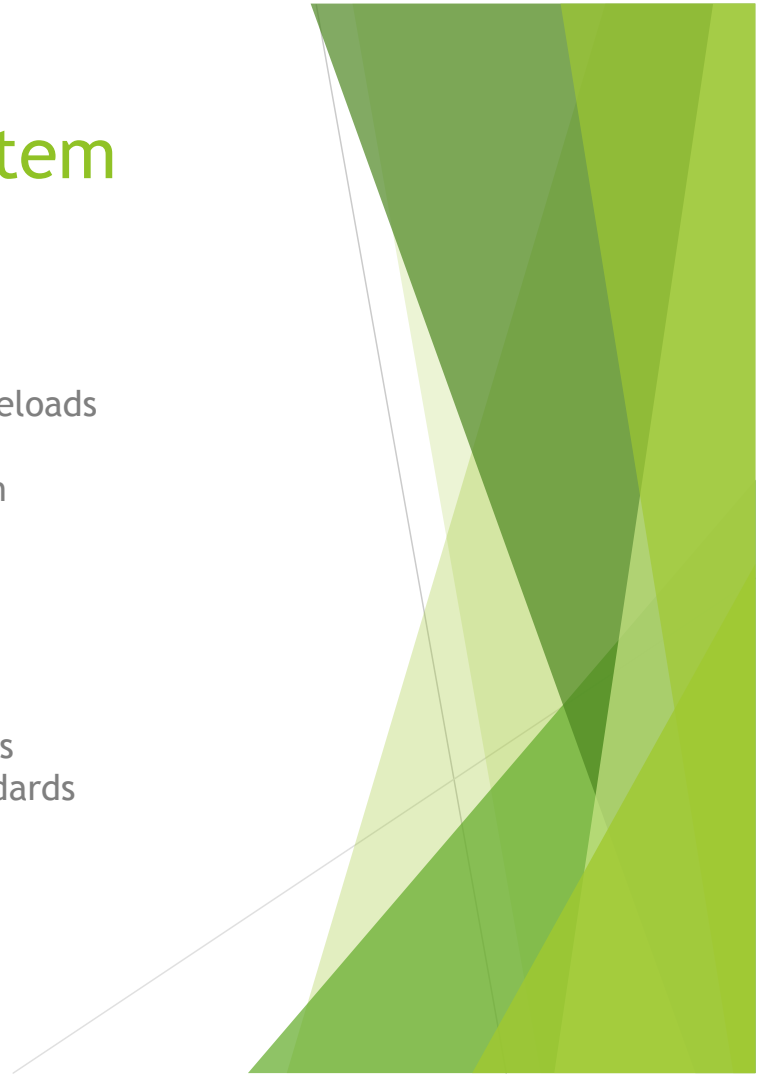
- Individuals can be quickly connected to local resources within their communities
- 7 call centers state-wide, 24/7 service to all 72 counties

*In 2016, United Way 2-1-1 received 376,228 calls from Wisconsin residents requesting for assistance.*

# Improving the Child Welfare System

## Committee to Study Child Welfare Worker Caseloads

- Wisconsin Task Force to Create Effective Child Welfare Caseloads
  - 16 representatives
    - Wisconsin County Human Service Association
    - Department of Children and Families
    - The Tribes
  - Study and make recommendations regarding:
    - Maximum caseload for caseworkers
    - Maximum ratio of supervisors to caseworkers
    - Funding necessary to implement these standards



# Improving the Child Welfare System

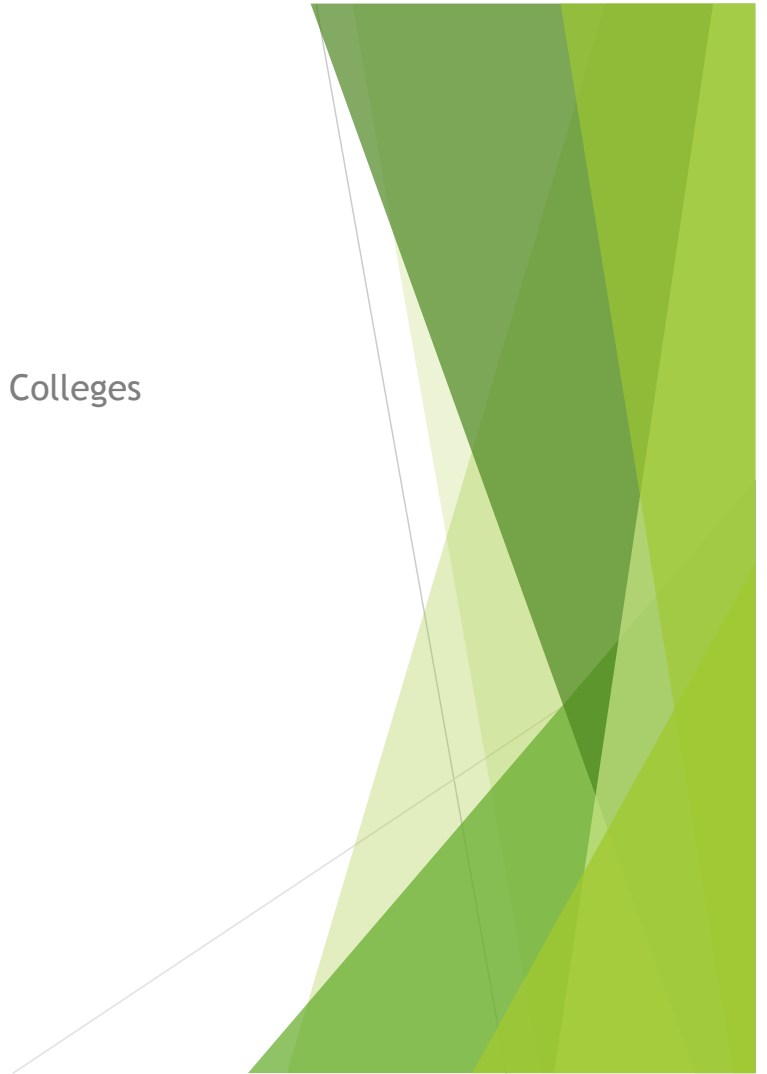
## Grants for Foster Parent Education and Support

- Shortage of licensed foster homes and difficulties retaining licensed foster homes
- Eligible Grantees: *Counties, Non-Profit Organizations and Tribes*
- Eligible Purposes: *Incentives to retain foster parents, enhance foster parent education and reimburse foster parents for foster-care related expenses*

# Support for Foster Care Youth

## Tuition Remission for Former Foster Youth

- All UW-System Institutions and Wisconsin Technical Colleges



## Timeline...

- Circulating for co-sponsorship this week
- Referred to committee, public hearing process begins
- Have the proposals to the floor in January or February





# Thank you!

Representative Patrick Snyder, 85<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
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