



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

December 15, 2016

Dear Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety:

We at the Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin recognize that the compensation for persons who have been wrongly convicted is too low. \$5,000 per year for each year, limited to a total of five years with a maximum of \$25,000 does not adequately help people to move forward with a new life after their livelihoods, families, educational possibilities, health and emotional well-being have likely been deeply impacted.

We support the proposed change of compensation to \$50,000 per year for each year of wrongful incarceration, limited to a total of 20 years with a \$1,000,000 max is far fairer, and we hope that that is sufficient. It is difficult to imagine the amount of damage done to a person's individual life and family after being wrongly imprisoned for any amount of time, but especially for several years.

We think that proposing to provide healthcare, at state employee rates, for up to 10 years to the wrongfully convicted is also great step. Finally, the financial assistance provided for 14 months or until their petition is settled is a fair way to help individuals reintegrate into society.

We appreciate the strong bi-partisan support for this very good bill. We also like that the bill aligns Wisconsin's wrongful conviction compensation law with the federal standard.

Please move forward with SB 322/AB 460, and support the passage of this bill. The long term investment in innocent people who have lost years of their lives and are vulnerable to falling into poverty is best for them and for Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Rev. Cindy Crane
LOPPW Director