

WI Senate Bill 41, relating to indoor environmental quality in public and private schools

The State of WI has heard testimony on a bill that could lead the way for healthier schools in our nation. On July 9th, the WI Senate Committee on Education heard testimony on Senate Bill 41, relating to indoor environmental quality in public and private schools. Watch and listen, using the links provided below, with speeches from several concerned community members, including Jeanne Black, of Darlington, WI, a devoted mother and mold-activist, whose daughter has suffered permanent, very serious disabilities due to unhealthy indoor air quality in Darlington schools. Our commendations to Mrs. Black for caring about the health of this nation's children! (SMH)

This is the photo of the Darlington school air vent (indoor) that Mrs. Black held up during her testimony. (Jeanne Black, photo)

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07.09.09 | Senate Committee on Education

The (WI State) Senate Committee on Education held a public hearing and executive session on July 9, 2009. The committee heard testimony on: Senate Bill 41, relating to indoor environmental quality in public and private schools; Senate Bill 135, relating to requiring instruction in public schools on the history of organized labor in America and the collective bargaining process; Assembly Bill 172, relating to requiring instruction in public schools on the history of organized labor in America and the collective bargaining process; Senate Bill 154, relating to school safety plans, pupil records, and school bullying. The executive session featured discussion of Senate Bill 89, relating to requirements for pupils enrolled in five-year-old kindergarten. [Watch](#) | [Listen](#) | [Link](#)

The text of two of the testimonies made regarding WI Senate Bill 41, on July 9, 2009:

I would like to take a moment and thank all of you for allowing me to speak on behalf of Senate Bill 41 Indoor Air Quality in our Public Schools.

My name is Jeanne Black and this is my daughter Jade Black who is now a freshman at the

University of Wisconsin Platteville. I am here speaking on behalf of all students in Wisconsin K-12 public and private schools.

We have experienced first hand problems with this life threatening health hazard in our public schools. What we are dealing with is sick building syndrome. We experienced what many at this moment have experienced and still are experiencing with problems with indoor air quality from molds, chemicals, cleaning chemicals and simply not enough fresh air coming into our schools in this state.

As a result with physician orders we left our school we were so proud of in the past. We then entered a pro-active school 5 years ago and symptoms were gone. No more inhalers and 350.00 worth of medications a month. No allergic reactions so severe they become life threatening. No child in the state of WI should have to take inhalers and medications to get thru school and many, many children are. Not to mention with this disability children are denied an education and we are an example of being denied a public school of our choice.

Without regulations and laws in Wisconsin on this issue it gives school boards and administrations a chance to deny, cover up, threatening jobs and simply not address the issue, while our children are inhaling toxic air on a daily basis. There are countless laws out there that regulate safety in our schools but we must continue to address each new problem and mandate the safety of our schools at all costs. Breathing toxic air is proven to be a health hazard and cancer causing.

I have met with and worked with Administration of schools, Principals, Cleaning staffs, Hygenists, State Health, Local Health, Insurance Companies, Dept. of Commerce, Engineers, Physicians, Cancer Research Specialists, WI Senate and Assembly, U.S. Senate, President of the U.S., members of groups from New York, California and all of these agencies have stated with no laws and regulations we cant enforce only recommend. My family and I were very active in the first indoor air quality bill introduced in WI Senate Bill 325 in 2006. Recommendations and guidelines are not enough, we need enforcement and Senate Bill 41 is a good start.

Without laws and regulations children like my daughter are denied an education. What is protecting these children with environmental disabilities? When we send our children out the door in the morning, we entrust their care to the administration of public schools. Please make schools accountable, educate them on sick building syndrome, educate maintenance staff to understand the hazards to themselves from chemical exposure, and make school boards liable for the safety of our children and let every student and employee breath clean air in every public school in

Wisconsin.

It is every child's right in the great state of

Wisconsin to breathe clean air. They are our future. It is every child's right to breath clean air but it is also their U.S. Civil Right. According to the U.S. Department of Civil Rights it is responsible for enforcing Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990(Title II),42 U.S.C. Statue 12132, and its implementing regulation at 28 C.F.,.R. Part 35, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability by public entities.

To the current date my daughter has been declared with a disability. The medical diagnosis is "SEVERE MOLD INDUCED ASTHMA". We are very fortunate to have excellent health insurance but what about the parents of many children who are not so fortunate. This has created a great hardship. Some families around the state have had to pick up their families and move so their children could attend school. This has created a huge financial burden.

I feel Senate Bill 41 is a good start but I would like to see penalties included if these laws are not met either by a financial penalty or civil and criminal charges. Without some type of penalties this law will not help this growing health concern.

There are many states right now that have laws on this issue or have legislation started.

Wisconsin needs to address this health hazard head on also.

If you can not breathe you can not learn.
Every child in the state of
Wisconsin and in the

U.S. has the right to breathe clean air.
There is only one solution to this situation. We must remove the danger entirely. Laws must be implemented and enforced to protect our children.

A provision I would like to see added to Senate Bill 41 is that if a child has physician orders to leave the environment due to an environmental disability that the school accommodate them to another public or private school. States around the U.S. are doing this at this time

Wisconsin should also.

As a result my daughter's exposure she has a disability. This effects where she lives, goes to school, and works for the rest of her life. She has been declared with a legal disability with substantial reactions to indoor environments according to the American Disabilities Act.

I support Senate Bill 41 and it is a step in the right direction for our children to remain healthy.

Thank you
Jeanne Black

Darlington,

WI

My name is Rita Ruiz, and this is my son Nick. We are in support of Senate Bill 41 relating to indoor environmental quality in our public and private schools. We have experienced first hand what an environmental problem in a public school can do.

We had no choice but to transfer Nick to another district because of the numerous health issues he was experiencing caused by mold. Some of my son's symptoms included chronic strep throat, rashes, mouth ulcers, irritable bowel, headaches and respiratory distress. Since he has attended his new school, his symptoms disappeared while in attendance, however, because of his previous exposure to these deadly mycotoxins, he is now severely allergic to mold and is permanently disabled. Nick has been diagnosed with trichothecene mycotoxicosis which is basically mold poisoning. His pathology report clearly demonstrated systemic yeast infection and severe chronic poisoning to the extent of Late stage II, with Late stage III being death. There was significant evidence of tissue cell loss and inflammation of all major organs and systems. In most cases, dead tissue cells from these organs will not ever be regenerated or replaced. At this stage, without treatment, the prognosis is poor. My son will now have to be monitored closely for the development of cancer within all major organs and systems. We have health insurance, but the treatment is not covered and it is not cheap. This has been a huge burden on our family. We now have to drive Nick to and from school daily to another district. We are now a one income family due to the fact that I cannot work a full-time job because I have to drive him to a different school district twice a day. My children's extra-curricular activities have been compromised because we live too far away and we cannot afford to be driving back and forth any more than necessary. We own a home that's been on the market for a very long time in a school district that our child cannot attend and one that we will not let our

other three children attend. We moved three times in four months in hopes of being able to live in the other school district, but because of finances and environmental issues with another home where we got no help with from the local health department, we had to move back. To say the least, the last three years have been extremely difficult and stressful for us as parents and for our children. This has rocked our world; and not in a good way.

We strongly support Senate Bill 41 but also feel that schools need to accommodate those who have physician's orders and have been declared disabled. This can be a life threatening situation. Please help other children so no one else has to go through what my child and family has gone through. Please support Senate Bill 41 relating to indoor environmental quality in public and private schools.

Wisconsin owes good health to their children. Thank you.

Rita Ruiz

Darlington,
WI
53530

WI Senator Sullivan's blog to post on, concerning senate bill 41 Indoor Air Quality in our public and private schools in WI
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<http://www.brookfieldnow.com/blogs/communityblogs/50269032.html?c=y&commentSubmitted=y#comments>