



Survival Coalition

of Wisconsin Disability Organizations

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Date: May 31, 2011

To: Members, Joint Committee on Finance

From: Survival Coalition Co-Chairs
Lynn Breedlove, Disability Rights Wisconsin
Maureen Ryan, Wisconsin Coalition of Independent Living Centers, Inc.
Beth Swedeen, WI Board for People with Developmental Disabilities

**Subject: Executive Action on 2011-13 Biennial Budget May 31, 2011
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES – ECONOMIC SUPPORT AND CHILD CARE
Wisconsin Works Time Limit Changes Paper # 213**

The Survival Coalition of Wisconsin Disability Organizations makes the following recommendations related to W-2 issues in the biennial budget bill:

Wisconsin Works Time Limit Changes Paper # 213
Requested Action: Adopt Alternative A. 3

Of the 17,000 W-2 recipient households in Wisconsin, 12,000 are located in Milwaukee County, (Dane County is second with 900 households) - this proposal will impact Milwaukee the hardest.

W-2 is extremely vital for people with disabilities in Milwaukee because of the broader definition of "barriers" that qualifies participants into subsidized work. These barriers may include hardships disregarded by the Medicaid/Social Security definition of disability, including: domestic violence, substance abuse, untreated/undiagnosed mental illnesses, children with disabilities affecting the caretaker's ability to work and legal/economic instability.

A 24-month time limit (rather than a flexible 60 months) on cash-subsidized W-2 assignments is harmful to a variety of families which more often than not include a person with a disability; whether this person is the caretaker, an elderly adult or minor child. In addition, parents of young children with complex disabilities, who are often in poverty, require this flexibility in order to locate adequate child care to return to work.

Eliminating the 24-month time limit has given the W-2 agencies more flexibility and reduced paperwork. As noted by the Fiscal Bureau (p. 4, #6), all but 10% of the paid W-2 caseload had left the program within the first 24 months, and about 75% of those who reached the 24-month limit received an extension.

For Further Information Contact Survival Coalition Co-Chairs:

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