

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 10, 2012

## Disability and Aging Advocates Thank Senate Health Committee: Ask Full Legislature for Swift Action to Lift the Caps on Long-Term Care Programs

Today the Senate Health Committee passed by unanimous vote a bill to remove the caps on Family Care, IRIS, PACE and Family Care Partnership – Wisconsin's long-term care programs that help seniors and people with disabilities remain in their homes with supports instead of being forced into costly institutional care.

This vote is a huge victory for seniors and people with disabilities across Wisconsin who need help with daily tasks like getting out of bed in the morning, getting dressed, eating a meal, getting to work and participating in the community.

Aging and disability advocates throughout the state give a tremendous thank you to Committee Chair Senator Leah Vukmir (R-Wauwatosa), Senator Pam Galloway (R-Wausau), Senator Terry Moulton (R-Chippewa Falls), Senator Jon Erpenbach (D-Middleton) and Senator Tim Carpenter (D-Milwaukee) for their leadership in taking the first steps to pass this bill. Their unanimous committee vote shows the strong bi-partisan commitment to people with disabilities and seniors in this state.

Advocates are encouraged by Chairwoman Vukmir's promise that the full Senate will be prepared to vote on and pass this legislation next week. Advocates urge the Assembly to also move swiftly with passage – noting the more than 8,000 people statewide waiting for critical supports and the people in counties that currently do not have access to any of these vital long-term care programs.

It should also be noted that failure to move forward with lifting the caps puts at risk \$1.7 billion in federal funding. Advocates say this is funding that Wisconsin cannot afford to lose.

Signed by the following disability and aging organizations:

AARP Wisconsin  
Alzheimer's Association of Southeastern Wisconsin  
Autism Society of Southeastern Wisconsin  
Board on Aging and Long Term Care  
Disability Rights Wisconsin  
IndependenceFirst  
Jewish Family Services of Milwaukee  
JFS Housing Inc.  
Life Navigators (Formerly ARC)  
Make It Work Milwaukee Coalition  
Mental Health America of Wisconsin  
Midwest Community Services, Inc.  
Milwaukee Area Developmental Disabilities Service Association  
NRS Services, LLC  
People First Wisconsin  
Survival Coalition of Wisconsin Disability Organizations  
The Arc of Racine County, Inc.  
United Cerebral Palsy of Southeast Wisconsin  
Wisconsin Aging Network  
Wisconsin Coalition of Independent Living Centers, Inc.  
Wisconsin Board for People for Developmental Disabilities