



Survival Coalition

of Wisconsin Disability Organizations

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To: Members, Joint Finance Committee May 22, 2017
From: Survival Coalition Co-Chairs
Subject: **Children's Long-Term Support Waiver Program - LFB Paper #323**

Survival Coalition is comprised of more than 30 statewide disability organizations that advocate and support policies and practices that lead to the full inclusion, participation, and contribution of people living with disability. Survival has reviewed the Legislative Fiscal Bureau's paper on Children's Long-Term Support Services (#323) and recommends supporting Governor Walker's budget proposal to end the wait list for children with the most significant disabilities needing long-term support.

Survival supports LFB Alternative A1. "Adopt the Governor's recommendation to provide funding to support services to children who are currently on the waiting list for CLTS services. Increase funding in the bill by \$94,900 (\$191,600 GPR and -\$96,700 FED) in 2017-18 and by \$184,200 (\$222,600 GPR and -\$38,400 FED) in 2018-19 to reflect reestimates of the cost of implementing the Governor's proposal."

This will assure that Wisconsin's investment in long-term supports to families and children with significant disabilities continues to keep children with their families and in their own homes and communities.

2600 children and youth with significant disabilities and their families are waiting for essential supports, such as specialized equipment or home modifications. The wait for children ranges from 1 to 8 years depending on where a family lives. While 46% of children eligible for long-term supports are waiting, a pathway to eliminate waiting lists for adults will be statewide by 2018.

Children eligible for long-term supports through the Children's Waiver are the only Medicaid population subject to a wait list due to lack of funding. Waiting means: missed opportunities for cognitive, physical and behavioral development, and learning skills for independence; families who have to reduce or stop working, impacting their economic stability and access to health insurance. An inability to meet less costly needs now can lead to expensive crises and higher future costs, in addition to significant stress for families.

LFB states "The Governor's proposal to serve all children who are on the current state waiting list for CLTS services would be consistent with the state's commitment to fully fund services to adults who qualify the state's MA-funded long-term care programs. In addition, the proposal would help minimize the risk of children entering out-of-home placements because families are unable to access adequate community supports, and would assist the state in complying with the recent CMS directive regarding the statewide waiting list for services"

Survival looks forward to working with members of the Joint Committee on Finance and DHS to assure the children's long-term supports program is effective, efficient and improve the lives of children and their families.

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Survival Coalition Issue Teams: education, employment, housing, long term care for adults, long term care for children, mental health, transportation, workforce, voting, Medicaid and health care.

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