



of Wisconsin Disability Organizations

101 East Wilson Street, Room 219, Madison, Wisconsin 53703
Voice: 608/266-7826 Fax: 608/267-3906

January 8, 2014

Senator Darling
Joint Finance Committee Co-Chair
State Capitol, Room 317 East
Madison, WI 53707

Representative Nygren
Joint Finance Committee Co-Chair
State Capitol, Room 309 East
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Sen. Darling, Rep. Nygren, and members of the Joint Finance Committee;

Thank you for the time and attention the Joint Finance Committee has devoted to considering the expansion of the Department of Health Services (DHS) Family Care program.

We appreciate your efforts to ensure that the expansion of Family Care into the remaining fifteen counties currently waiting will be a good investment for Wisconsin taxpayers. We are pleased with the thoroughness and level of detail DHS provided in their report to Joint Finance on their cost-benefit analysis of Family Care.

The DHS report clearly demonstrates that expanding Family Care would reduce the growth of state spending by \$34.7 million over the next ten years and eliminate the waiting list for 1600 people in 15 counties. Family Care expansion creates equity in long-term care supports statewide while also being cost-effective to taxpayers.

In the 57 counties that currently have Family Care, residents with disabilities and older adults can access supports in their homes and communities when they need them, which keeps them out of costly nursing homes and other institutions. The story is much different for residents in the 15 counties still waiting for Family Care; people can wait years—sometimes a decade or longer—for help. Access to supports that enable people to stay in their homes and communities should be available statewide, not dependent on the county in which a person lives.

Now that the report Joint Finance requested has been delivered and the fiscal analysis is favorable, the Survival Coalition requests clarification on the next steps JFC will take to move forward on Family Care expansion and the timeline by which additional counties will transition to Family Care. The Survival Coalition supports equal access to the same community supports statewide, and looks forward to working with Joint Finance and the legislature on expanding

Family Care to all Wisconsin counties. We would appreciate a prompt response, and representatives from Survival Coalition will follow up with your offices on this issue in later this month.

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.

Sincerely,

Survival Co-Chairs:

Maureen Ryan, moryan@charter.net; (608) 444-3842;
Beth Swedeen, beth.swedeen@wisconsin.gov; (608) 266-1166;
Kristin M. Kerschensteiner, kitk@drwi.org; (608) 267-0214

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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