

Rep. Subeck: Republican plan would diminish nursing care quality, Democrats provide alternative solution to Wisconsin's Certified Nursing Aide shortage

Posted on Friday, Nov 3, 2017

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

CONTACT: Zach Madden, 608-266-7521(office) 608-620-3884 (cell)

MADISON – Today, Assembly Republicans passed a bill that would reduce the required number of hours a Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) is required to complete prior to certification. Democrats offered amendments that would increase wages and expand access to training for these nursing aides working on the frontlines of long-term healthcare and nursing facilities.

“We have all had someone we know and love who relied on a nursing aide for their day-to-day care. These professionals are on the front lines providing daily care to our parents, our grandparents, or to our loved ones when they are at their most vulnerable,” said Representative Lisa Subeck (D-Madison). “Any reduction in the training these individual receive puts our state’s most vulnerable residents at risk.”

Demand for CNAs in Wisconsin is projected to grow exponentially due to growth in the aging population. Meanwhile, the median starting wage for personal caregivers is \$10.75 per hour according to a joint report of the Wisconsin Health Care Association, Wisconsin Center for Assisted Living, Wisconsin Assisted Living Association, LeadingAge Wisconsin, and Residential Services Association of Wisconsin. The same report indicates that the median wage paid by non-health care employers for unskilled, entry level workers is \$1.25 more than the wage paid to

caregivers.

Representative Subeck offered three amendments to address the shortage of nursing aides through increased wages and expanded access to training. The first amendment would have increased the Medicaid reimbursement rate for personal care services by accepting the Federal Medicaid expansion dollars. The amendment required that the reimbursement increase go directly to increasing wages of frontline caretakers. Two additional amendments would have created a tax credit for tuition costs for CNAs and provided funding to technical colleges to expand access to CNA training in underserved areas, while maintaining current training standards. Each failed on a party line vote.

“Republicans have systematically worked dismantle access to healthcare and to drive down wages,” said Rep. Subeck. “I am proud to stand with my Democratic colleagues in the fight to raise wages for frontline healthcare workers and to grow the workforce without diminishing quality of care.”