

WDA: Dairy group stands up for farmers and business owners

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The Wisconsin Dairy Alliance (WDA) signed an amicus brief with Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce (WMC) supporting the Wisconsin Legislature's emergency petition being heard today before the Wisconsin Supreme Court. An amicus brief, or "friend of the court", is a legal document filed in court by non-litigants with a strong interest in the subject matter. Amicus briefs also advise the court of relevant and additional information or arguments that the court might want to consider.

This historic lawsuit brought forward by the state's elected senators and representatives calls into question if Governor Evers' executive branch Department of Health Services operated within the boundaries set forth within the state law, and if the agency followed the procedural requirements for the rule-making process. The legislature filed this lawsuit after the additional orders issued by the Department of Health Services Secretary-designee Andrea Palm's April 20th Emergency Order #31 extending the lockdown until May 26. The orders issued by DHS Secretary-designee Andrea Palm, claimed more authority to shut down Wisconsin businesses and sideline our workers than the Wisconsin Governor who appointed her.

WDA believes joining in this amicus brief plays a critical role in protecting our fundamental rights and that non-elected appointed agency personnel must be stopped from exceeding their legal authority.

According to the Badger Institute, the shutdown of Wisconsin's economy costs the state \$178.9 million in lost production daily. The economic harm to our state's economy, including the dairy industry, grows exponentially the longer this lockdown continues. Many will not survive.

The collapsing dairy industry alone has lost over \$1 billion, with no end in sight. We know there is no federal or state assistance package large enough to make up for the financial hemorrhaging our dairy farmers are suffering from.

For the past 5 years, the dairy industry has suffered through poor milk prices, trade

issues, weather issues and now this pandemic. We are witnessing daily, the unprecedented market collapse of such magnitude that it could wipe out 3 of every 10 dairies by year's end.

We need the immediate responsible reopening of Wisconsin's economy and believe the WMC Back to Business Plan will help protect the livelihood of our farmers, businesses and the security of our food supply, while safely opening our state for business. We can do both.

It is time for all Wisconsin citizens, associations and our government to exhibit leadership and stand behind our state business owners and farmers.