

Wisconsin Health Care Association and the Wisconsin Center for Assisted Living: Long-term care providers applaud passage of COVID-19 relief legislation

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MADISON — The Wisconsin Health Care Association and the Wisconsin Center for Assisted Living (WHCA/WiCAL) applauded Legislators and Governor Evers for enacting Assembly Bill 1038, the COVID-19 relief legislation, into law today. “Long-term care providers thank Governor Evers and the State Legislature for enacting meaningful relief for health care providers who are on the front lines of battling the COVID-19 pandemic in Wisconsin,” said John Vander Meer, President & CEO of WHCA/WiCAL. “This bill passed with wide support from both Republicans and Democrats, and providers appreciate this bipartisan effort to enact important and needed assistance for healthcare workers and long-term care facilities.”

The bill suspends certain state Medical Assistance provisions to meet federal conditions for increased Federal Medical Assistance Percentages (FMAP), allowing the state to be eligible for up to \$300 million in federal funds. In addition, the bill allows the Joint Committee on Finance to transfer a maximum of \$75 million toward COVID-19 relief efforts for up to three months after the state’s public health emergency declaration ends.

The legislation provides key liability protections for Wisconsin’s long-term care providers, as well as sets Wisconsin’s nurse aide certification training requirement at 75 hours, a necessary provision to help address Wisconsin’s [ongoing frontline caregiver workforce crisis](#) by increasing opportunities for potential CNA candidates to enter the profession.

“This legislation includes critical regulatory flexibilities and protections for

caregivers and providers who are dedicated to preventing the spread of COVID-19,” Vander Meer said. “I would like to thank our providers across the state who have worked very hard to advocate for the CNA training policy for several years, as a means of addressing Wisconsin’s well-documented frontline caregiver crisis, which has only been made more of a challenge as a result of COVID-19.”