

WALA: Commends Joint Finance Committee actions

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The Wisconsin Assisted Living Association (WALA) wishes to thank members of the Joint Finance Committee for approving an omnibus motion that provides much needed funding to help assisted living providers deal with increased labor market wages and inflation. (see Legislative Fiscal Bureau Budget Paper #420 Alternatives A1 and B2)

*"We are truly grateful to the Joint Finance Committee for investing an additional \$38,432,600 (All Funds) over the biennium in caregivers," **stated Michael Pochowski, President & CEO.** "In addition, we appreciate the continuation of the 5% rate increase to providers that went into effect on January 1, 2022. As Wisconsin's workforce crisis continues many assisted living facilities face significant staffing and financial challenges. These investments are necessary to maintain quality care and services to elderly individuals and those with disabilities."*

The Direct Care Workforce Funding Initiative provides increases for the direct care and services component of the Family Care program capitation rates to offer much needed wage increases for long-term care caregivers. Family Care is a state Medicaid waiver program that provides and pays for long-term care services for Wisconsin's most vulnerable populations of frail elderly and individuals with disabilities. This action will target critically needed increases to address the long-term care workforce crisis. The Family Care Program serves more than 55,000 individuals in Wisconsin. (Family Care | Wisconsin Department of Health Services)