

For Immediate Release

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## Disability Rights Wisconsin Concerned about Supreme Court Decision

Disability Rights Wisconsin was disappointed to see that the Wisconsin Supreme Court has struck down Secretary-Designee Palm's Safer at Home order. DRW filed an amicus brief in this case, in collaboration with a number of national and local disability advocacy organizations, to provide the Court with insight into the heightened risk COVID-19 poses for people with disabilities and concerns for opening up the state too soon or suddenly.

COVID-19 is particularly dangerous to people with disabilities, older adults, and people with certain underlying conditions. Guidance from the state's top public health officials is critical to help these vulnerable populations navigate these risks and stay healthy. As the state and local communities move forward without the statewide stay at home order it is important that the plans developed to stem the spread of the virus and keep citizens safe recognize and include the special considerations that must be given to protect our most vulnerable citizens.

As people return to work and travel more widely the risk of contracting the disease or spreading it to the most vulnerable will increase. People at high risk from COVID-19 rely on the actions of the entire community for protection, which means that many of the current measures, such as wearing masks, social distancing, and work from home options need to continue into the foreseeable future.

"DRW continues to be extremely concerned that all the necessary protections remain in place for people with medical vulnerabilities, whether services are coming into their home or they live in a congregate setting, such as a group home or nursing home. This includes the provision of sufficient Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), COVID-19 testing, and eventual vaccination against COVID-19 for both residents and care providers," said Kit Kerschensteiner, Director of Advocacy and Legal Services. "There needs to be careful consideration on how to safely reopen, protect congregate settings, and make sure we are prepared to respond to a spike in infections that may occur down the line."

*Disability Rights Wisconsin is the federally mandated Protection and Advocacy system for the State of Wisconsin, charged with protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and keeping individuals free from abuse and neglect.*

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