



Wisconsin Personal Services Association

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Applauds Governor Evers for Funding Task Force on Caregiving Recommendations in 2021-23 State Budget

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 9, 2021

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The Wisconsin Personal Services Association applauds Governor Evers for investing more than \$600 million in his 2021-23 state budget to fund policy solutions developed by the Governor's Task Force on Caregiving to address the state's direct care workforce crisis. Many of these proposals had the overwhelming, bi-partisan support of Task Force members.

"Governor Evers' planned investments in the direct care workforce are welcome news to our frontline caregivers who have risked their safety to continue providing needed in-home care to older adults and people with disabilities throughout the COVID-19 pandemic," said WPSA President Todd Costello.

Survey results from 300 direct support professionals released by the Wisconsin Personal Services Association, Wisconsin Long Term Care Workforce Alliance, Survival Coalition of Wisconsin Disability Organizations and InControl Wisconsin in November 2020 showed that the direct care workforce is at a breaking point. Nearly half of respondents said they work a second job in order to support themselves, and 76% of respondents say the main reason they have considered leaving the profession is for a higher-paying job or one that provides benefits. As workers exit the profession, it leaves older adults and people with disabilities without needed care.

The investments proposed by Governor Evers will help contribute to higher pay for direct support professionals by building on the historic Medicaid personal care reimbursement rate increases included in the last state budget and taking steps to ensure that Family Care rates reflect the true cost of providing care. WPSA also supports efforts outlined by Governor Evers to provide comprehensive training to direct support professionals as well as initiatives aimed at unpaid family caregivers.

"We would like to thank Senator Kathy Bernier and Representative Chuck Wichgers for their leadership on the Governor's Task Force on Caregiving as well as former Senator Patty Schachtner and former Representative Deb Kolste," said Costello.

"WPSA looks forward to working with the Legislature, Governor Evers and the Department of Health Services throughout the state budget process to ensure access to cost-effective, in-home caregiving services," said Costello.

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