



WISCONSIN BOARD FOR PEOPLE
WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

For Immediate Release

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State Senate unanimous passes bi-partisan bill to provide free training for Guardians

(Madison) -- Yesterday the state Senate unanimously passed SB 92, a bill that will provide free online training to family and volunteer guardians about the role, responsibilities, and other important features of Wisconsin's guardianship law before they are appointed.

"As families plan for the future, consider what support their loved ones want or need with decisions, or find themselves stepping into a new role, it's critical we support family members and volunteers willing to serve as guardians," said Beth Swedeen, Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities Executive Director.

The bill outlines required training topics including alternatives to guardianship, legal roles/responsibilities/requirements of guardians, rights of wards, and where to go for resources and support.

"We hear from parents, siblings, friends, and extended family across the state who are overwhelmed, unprepared, and don't know the full range of decision-making supports available," said Swedeen. "This bill is important and needed, especially as caregivers, existing guardians, and our state's population age and more of us may find ourselves in the position of providing decision-making support to a loved one or needing help ourselves."

The bill provides free plain-language training accessible online for potential and current guardians and others—including teachers, medical staff, aging and disability resource centers, direct service providers, people with disabilities or older adults, and family members--seeking standardized and accurate information about guardianship and alternatives to guardianship.

BPDD is pleased this bill enjoys strong bipartisan support, and thanks Sen. Jacque (R-DePere) and Rep. Zimmerman (R-River Falls) for their leadership on this bill and the long bi-partisan list of Senate and Assembly co-sponsors including: Senators Bernier, Ballweg, Bewley, Carpenter, Johnson, Larson, Pfaff, Ringhand, L. Taylor, Testin, Wanggaard and Wirch and Representatives Dittrich, Baldeh, Bowen, Brandtjen, Edming, Gundrum, Hong, Knodl, B. Meyers, Moses, Mursau, Ortiz-Velez, J.Rodriguez, Shankland, Sinicki, Spreitzer, Summerfield, Tauchen, Thiesfeldt, Vining, Vruwink and Wichgers.

The bill must now pass the full Assembly before it can be sent to the Governor to be signed into law. BPDD is pleased to work with legislative leaders and constituents on legislation like SB 92 that improves the lives of people with disabilities and help solve real challenges that Wisconsinites face every day across our state.

BPDD is charged under the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act with advocacy, capacity building, and systems change to improve self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life for people with developmental disabilities More about BPDD https://wi-bpdd.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Legislative_Overview_BPDD_Final_01042020.pdf .