From: Janet Zander
To: Janet Zander
Subject: State & Federal Advocacy Updates
Date: Tuesday, July 8, 2025 11:35:54 AM

Caution: This email originated from outside of Milwaukee County. Use the Phish Alert Report button to have IMSD review this message if you think it is suspicious.

WAAN Members,

Last week was a very busy week at the state and federal level.

Since our next meeting isn't until 7/17, below is a summary of last week's activities.

State

- **Alzheimer's Family and Caregiver Support Program (AFCSP) Legislation Could Become Law by Mid-August!**

In late June, the full Assembly and Senate passed Senate Bill 152 (SB 152). SB 152/AB 176 removes income requirements for the Alzheimer's Family and Caregiver Support Program (AFCSP) to align with the federal National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP). Removing income-based eligibility requirements from AFCSP will protect $3.5 million in annual federal NFCSP funding and ensure support remains accessible to low- and middle-income families. One-third of the state legislators signed on in support of this bipartisan legislation. SB 152 was enrolled on June 25, 2025. The enrolled bill represents the final legislative product that's ready to potentially become law in Wisconsin. In preparation to send the enrolled bill to the Governor, the enrolled bill is formatted as an act (law). **The next deadline for the legislature to send enrolled bills (in act format) to the Governor is Aug. 7**; this means on or before Aug. 7, SB 152 will be sent to the Governor's desk. Once a bill has been presented, the Governor has six days, excluding Sundays, to sign it into law or veto the bill. If the Governor neither signs nor vetoes a bill, it automatically becomes law without their signature. If the legislation is signed into law by the Governor or allowed to become law (after six days), it will take effect the day after publication. **Stay tuned for updates, this important legislation is expected to become law by mid-August!** For more information see the legislation text for SB 152 - https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/related/proposals/sb152 and the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network's (WAAN's) AFCSP issue brief - https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008453 .

- **State Budget 2025-2027 Wrap Up**

The Wisconsin State Legislature's Joint Finance Committee (JFC) held their last meeting on the 2025-2027 state budget on Tues. July 1, 2025. The agenda for the meeting included all remaining sections of the biennial budget that had not already been acted on; including the state Department of Health Services (DHS) and the state Department of Transportation (DOT) budgets in which the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) had funding requests.
In the DHS budget, the JFC approved:

- **Increases of 2% in each year of the budget** ($1.1 million over the biennium) to the **Income Maintenance (IM)** base contracts,
- **Increases** to the base allocations **for county and tribal Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) of $3.7 million** (all funds- state and federal, state GPR increase = $2

million) **over the biennium**, with no increase provided for the tribal aging and disability resource specialists,

- **Increasing funding for Independent Living Center Grants by $203,600 annually**,
- **Funding** ($2 million all funds in fiscal year 2025-26) **for the WisCaregiver Career program** to help address the state's shortage of certified nursing assistants and direct care professionals,
- A new appropriation of **$7 million over the biennium for 988 suicide and crisis lifeline grants**,
- A supplemental appropriation of **$10 million for crisis urgent care and observation facility grants**,
- **Cost-to-continue money** needed to keep Wisconsin's **Medicaid programs** running as they do now,
- Funding for a **Family Care minimum fee schedule**. This ensures residential providers will be paid at least a base rate no matter where they are in the state or what Family Care managed care organization (MCO) they contract with and will allow these providers serving older adults and people with disabilities to **raise the wages for their direct care workers**, and
- Increases to the **Medicaid rates for Personal Care, Home Health Care, and Private Duty Nursing**, to help **address the critical shortage of direct care workers**.

See the Comparative Summary of Budget Recommendations – from the Governor and JFC for the Department of Health Services - https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/misc/lfb/budget/2025_27_biennial_budget/400_comparative_summary_of_budget_recommendations_governor_and_joint_committee_on_finance_july_2025_by_agency/health_services.pdf.

In the DOT budget, the JFC approved:

- **A 10% increase in Paratransit Aids**, and
- Increasing transportation grants to counties ($75,000 SEG annually) for transportation provided to veterans.

See the Comparative Summary of Budget Recommendations – from the Governor and JFC for the Department of Transportation https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/misc/lfb/budget/2025_27_biennial_budget/400_comparative_summary_of_budget_recommendations_governor_and_joint_committee_on_finance_july_2025_by_agency/transportation.pdf.

The state Senate and the Assembly passed the 2025-2027 State Budget on Wed., July 2. On Thurs., July 3, Governor Evers signed SB 45 (now 2025 Act 15) - https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/related/acts/15) into law. The 2025-2027 budget is the result of bipartisan budget compromise between the Governor and the majority leaders in the state legislature. The Governor used his partial veto authority to remove what he called, non-negotiated sections in the budget. The Governor's partial veto message can be read here - https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/WIGOV/2025/07/03/file_attachments/3314199/2025-27%20Veto%20Message%20Final.pdf.

An updated summary of the final status of WAAN's budget priorities will be available in the coming week.

Federal

Budget Reconciliation Bill Signed into Law

Last week, the U.S. Senate and House passed the final version of H.R. 1 - https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/1, known as the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA). The President signed the legislation into law on the Fourth of July.

The OBBBA marks the biggest change to health care policy since the passage of the Affordable Care Act in 2011 and will drive the largest cuts ever made since the creation of Medicaid nearly 60 years ago. According to an initial estimate from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), which does not yet reflect the final language of the bill, this legislation will cut Federal spending on Medicaid, Medicare, and the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplace by more than $1.1 Trillion. More than **$1 Trillion of those cuts come from Medicaid alone**. **At least 11.8 million people are expected to lose their health care by 2034.** These numbers are likely to increase when more detailed analysis of the final bill is done. The bill also **cuts $300 Billion in food assistance** and is expected to take food away from an estimated 5 million people. As many as two-thirds of the people in Wisconsin who use SNAP (or FoodShare in Wis.) also participate in the Medicaid program; these individuals are likely to experience compounding damages from cuts to these programs.

The OBBBA results in states receiving less Federal Medicaid money to help run their current Medicaid programs (like Family Care, IRIS, CLTS, and ForwardHealth Card, in Wisconsin), shifts new costs onto states that they don't have now, and creates big state budget holes. It also places more requirements on program participants. The additional paperwork, some Medicaid participants will face to **"prove they are working/exempt" are expected to increase the risk of mistakes. These mistakes can be hard to correct, will cause some people to lose their Medicaid coverage or experience delays in coverage, and could result in a loss of providers/workers when payments are made promptly. The ripple effects of this new law will impact all of us. Older adults, people living with disabilities, family caregivers, and the programs that support them, all face the consequences of these cuts, as do all those who lose health and long term care jobs, experience higher private health insurance premiums (resulting from increase uncompensated care), deal with clinic and facility closures, and/or are unpaid caregivers forced to leave the workforce to fill in the growing gaps in care as best they can**.

With H.R. 1 now signed into law, the focus in Congress is expected to shift to the upcoming fiscal year (FY) 2026 appropriations process. Stay tuned for more opportunities to push for increased funding for Older Americans Act and other aging service funding.

Janet

Janet Zander
Advocacy & Public Policy Coordinator, MPA, CSW
Phone: 608-228-7253
Email: janet.zander@gwaar.org | Website: www.gwaar.org
Like us on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/WAAN.ACTION|
Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc.