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WI Board for People with Developmental Disabilities Supports Executive Order Creating Caregiver Task Force

(MADISON) – The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) supports Governor Tony Evers’ announcement today of an Executive Order that will create a Caregiver Task Force charged with identifying strategies to recruit, support and retain direct caregivers and support families who provide countless hours of care to loved ones.

“People living with developmental disabilities and their families see first-hand that the caregiver shortage in Wisconsin cannot be solved by raising wages alone,” said Beth Swedeen, BPDD Executive Director. “A lack of adequately trained and compensated workers coupled with strain on family caregivers has reached a crisis in every part of our state.”

Swedeen said BPDD appreciates that the Governor’s Executive Order identifies the need to develop strategies both to attract and retain a strong direct care workforce, and also address the need for supports to family caregivers through adequate respite services and other supports.

Addressing both the need for better wages and offering benefits such as health care are critical to attract and retain quality workers, Swedeen said. She added that health care for family caregivers who have been forced to reduce or leave paid employment also is important.

“We are glad to see that the Executive Order and the Task Force Charge recognize the need to develop a range of policies to support both paid and unpaid caregivers, including affordable and adequate healthcare, a registry of home care providers to provide referral and matching services, plans to recruit and retain providers, and state cross-department collaboration.”

Swedeen said BPDD looks forward to working with the Governor and the Legislature on this critical issue in the months ahead.