



Real Possibilities

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Contact: Jim Flaherty, Communications Director
Office 608/ 286-6308 – Cell 608/ 698-0928

AARP lauds decision to remove Family Care changes from budget, but cautions limitations

MADISON, WISCONSIN – AARP Wisconsin today applauds the decision by the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) to reject the governor’s proposed changes to Family Care in the 2015-17 state budget, but cautions that several requirements in the instructions from the JFC to the Department of Health Services (DHS) might limit opportunities for improving the program going forward.

“This is a great start toward protecting, preserving and continuing one of the nation’s finest long-term care programs,” said Helen Marks Dicks, state issues advocacy director for AARP Wisconsin. “We want to thank the JFC for listening to our concerns and removing Family Care changes from the state budget.

“We just have to be cautious that a wide range of specific requirements being explored by the JFC in their instructions to DHS could actually be limiting and detrimental to keeping this program operating as smoothly and cost-efficiently as it is now,” Dicks said.

“Many good ideas have come forward during discussions about Family Care over the past couple months. We look forward to continuing these conversations with the JFC, DHS and stakeholders to build on Wisconsin’s current long-term care system and make it even better,” Dicks said.

Family Care is a popular and cost-effective Wisconsin program that gives frail elderly and people with disabilities the opportunity to receive long-term care services in their homes and communities rather than in costly institutions, which is where they’d rather be anyway, Dicks said.

The program, which is available in 64 of Wisconsin’s 72 counties, closely tailors long-term care services to the needs of the individual, saving tens of thousands of dollars per person and leading to better health care outcomes.

“Family Care is all about giving seniors independence and choices about the services and supports available to meet their needs. Everyone deserves access to quality, accessible, cost-effective long-term care. By any measure, this program is a win-win for taxpayers and citizens,” Dicks said.

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