



The Wisconsin Long-Term Care Coalition

Keep Our Care at Home

Lisa Pugh, 608-469-9385

Local Small Businesses, County Leaders Discuss Serious Economic Impact and Job Loss Associated with Proposed Changes in State Budget

(NEENAH) -- Local businesses facing uncertain economic future as a result of proposed changes in the state budget regarding Wisconsin's long-term care system shared their concerns with media at a press event Thursday in Neenah.

Several local small businesses have predicted that changes proposed in the biennial budget to long-term care will force them out of business. Even with today's announcement by Joint Finance Committee leadership that it would remove some of the budget's proposed changes to long-term care, businesses say there are enough unanswered questions to pose continued economic challenges to their future viability.

Empowerment Living Services CEO Jennifer Burgess (a Neenah small business serving 70% IRIS clients) joined Community Care Connections Wisconsin CEO Mark Hilliker (an area Family Care small business) and other employers in sharing their concerns about their own business future and that of the more than 3,300 Wisconsin employees statewide whose jobs could be impacted by the proposed changes. Employers from the Oshkosh, Appleton and Fond du Lac also participated in the event.

Some businesses, including those slated to participate in the proposed expansion of Family Care to Northeast Wisconsin, have indicated they are now unable to hire and expand their businesses.

In early April a Slinger-based company with statewide offices that also serve people in Outagamie and surrounding counties announced closure and 700 lay-offs. In a statement, GeminiCares CEO said, "the uncertainty of long-term care system of service provision due to changes



The Wisconsin Long-Term Care Coalition

Keep Our Care at Home

proposed by Governor Walker weighed heavily into the decision to cease operations.”

The media event included county leaders who outlined concerns for the economic future of the region. Outagamie County Executive Tom Nelson and Portage County Executive Patty Dreier shared local economic data related to the long-term care industry.

The group requests that the Legislature’s Joint Committee on Finance analyze potential impact on Wisconsin businesses and regional job losses as part of any effort toward changing Wisconsin’s long-term care industry.