

For Immediate Release: May 26, 2017
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Disability Rights Wisconsin Applauds Joint Finance for Ending Waiting Lists for Children

Madison, WI- Disability Rights Wisconsin applauds the Joint Finance Committee for taking the bold step to finally eliminate waiting lists for children with disabilities to receive long term care services. The members of Joint Finance supported the Governor's investment of \$39 million dollars to support families raising children with significant disabilities.

Disability Rights Wisconsin and many other disability advocates have sought the elimination of waiting lists for children for over a decade. This investment makes sense from a policy and budget perspective. DRW has worked with parents and advocates to advance this idea ever since Wisconsin's Children's Long Term Supports Medicaid Waiver program was approved. Families who have a child with significant disabilities are more likely to live in poverty and experience financial hardship and stress than other families. Yet in Wisconsin, 46% of eligible children and families have been waiting for services that help them live at home and be part of their communities, including specialized equipment, respite, or home modifications. These supports will allow more parents to maintain active participation in the workforce.

"Over 2200 families of children with disabilities have been waiting too long to get the needed supports and services to help their children live at home and reach their full potential. Families will have the services needed to take care of their children. Tomorrow these families can breathe a sigh of relief for their children with disabilities knowing help is on the horizon," said Dan Idzikowki, Executive Director for DRW.

This commitment by Joint Finance makes the provision of long term supports in Wisconsin more equitable between eligible adults and children. We believe this funding to support children and families today will have a lasting positive effect that will result in a higher quality of life and less pressure on the adult long term care system in the future.

Disability Rights Wisconsin is the federally mandated Protection and Advocacy agency for the State of Wisconsin.

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