



John Nygren

WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE ★ 89TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Finance

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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JFC Republicans Make Historic Investments in Healthcare

Madison--State Representative John Nygren (R-Marinette), Co-Chair of the Joint Committee on Finance released the following statement:

“This week, the Republican members of the Joint Committee on Finance made historic investments aimed at increasing healthcare access and affordability for millions of Wisconsinites. Republicans on the committee voted to provide \$1.6 billion in all funds to expand access and care. We were able to fund many of the priorities we heard from citizens across the state, without expanding welfare. These are bipartisan initiatives supported by numerous stakeholders.”

“The number one issue we heard about during our budget listening sessions as we traveled the state was healthcare workforce. There is no denying the dire need for investments in our healthcare workforce surrounding direct caregivers and personal care workers who serve our most vulnerable.”

“I am happy to report that the message was received and Republicans voted to support these priorities at historic levels, well above Governor Evers’ budget. No amount of rhetoric or spin can argue the fact that many of our investments in healthcare exceeded the Governor’s proposal.”

This budget will include the following priorities that we heard consistently while we travelled the state:

- ***Increase funding for nursing homes by \$30 million GPR over the biennium:***
 - This approximately a 6.0% increase in nursing home reimbursement rates, we are also including a 1% acuity rate increase as part of the MA cost to continue.
 - The Governor's budget only increased this by \$10.7M over the biennium.
- ***Increasing funding for Personal Care Workers by \$37 million GPR over the biennium:***
 - Change from current rate of \$16.73 to new hourly rate of \$18.24 starting July 1, 2019.
 - Personal care increase is about 9% in the first year and includes an additional 3% in the second year.



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- The Governor's budget only increased personal care rates \$7M over the biennium.
- ***Increase funding for Direct Caregivers in Family Care by \$27 million over the biennium:***
 - Over the biennium we are more doubling the base funding (\$12.5 million GPR annually) for the direct care workforce funding initiative.
 - The Governor's budget only increased this by \$12 million over the biennium.
- ***Substantial Increase in Children and Family Aids***
 - We are dramatically increasing Children and Family Aids by \$30.5 million over the biennium all funds
 - Where Governor Evers failed, we are stepping up.
 - Counties are unable to meet current obligations in the child welfare system for many reasons
 - Wisconsin is facing struggles with opioids and methamphetamines, which is putting additional pressures on the child welfare system with referrals, out-of-home placements and general increase in caseloads for social workers.

“I now ask Governor Evers: Will you veto these significant increases in access and affordability just because they aren’t funded by expanding welfare? Because if you do, it is more clear than ever that Medicaid expansion isn’t about expanding access to care, but simply playing politics with people's healthcare.”