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Save IRIS asks Legislators to Follow the Facts, Not the Big Insurance Lobby

(Madison) Save IRIS supports The Wisconsin Long-term Care Coalition's [memo that states that the Department of Health Services has not "met the burden of proof to justify moving forward on Family Care/IRIS 2.0."](#) Since the 2015-2017 State budget proposal was released in February of 2015, Save IRIS and other advocacy groups have questioned whether an overhaul of the current long-term care system would result in cost-savings and this question has been answered in a financial analysis done by DHS... No.

Members of Save IRIS question why the state would proceed with a plan that will not save money, but will disrupt the lives of people using IRIS and Family Care by forcing them into for-profit insurance companies. "It looks to me like the only winners here are IHAs- big insurance," says Nancy Gapinski of Glendale whose mother uses IRIS. "Long-term Care participants and their support providers, other taxpayers, and Wisconsin businesses lose."

There is much to lose:

- **Services:** Approximately 12,000 people with disabilities and older adults use IRIS and another 48,000 rely on Family Care to meet their long-term care needs. They are generally very satisfied with their services.
- **State Investments:** Millions of dollars has been invested in developing the infrastructure of our current long-term care system of Family Care, IRIS, and Partnership.
- **Jobs:** Thousands of people are employed throughout the state directly by participants, at agencies providing essential supports and services, IRIS consultant agencies, and non-profit managed care organizations.
- **Self-Direction:** Legislators promised that the new IRIS program "would look just like it does now." The proposed Family Care/IRIS 2.0 system significantly changes the assessment process and budgeting process and places the ability to self-direct in jeopardy.

Save IRIS is grateful that the Joint Finance Committee required that DHS share their long-term care plan prior to seeking federal approval. We are hopeful that the data from the actuarial study and information gathered by the Legislative Fiscal Bureau can be used by legislators to make an informed decision that eliminating our current long-term care system to move to Family IRIS/2.0 is not in the best interest of Wisconsin. Save IRIS now asks the legislature and DHS to follow the facts and not the big insurance lobby.

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"Save IRIS, Wisconsin's Self Direction Advocates" is a non-partisan association of IRIS participants and their allies dedicated to promoting self-direction in Wisconsin.



www.saveiris.org