



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL AGING ADVOCACY DAY

The Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) is a collaboration of organizations and individuals working with and for Wisconsin's older adults to shape public policy and improve the quality of life for older people.

Core member organizations:

Aging and Disability Professionals Association of Wisconsin (ADPAW)

Alzheimer's Association Wisconsin Chapter

Wisconsin Adult Day Services Association (WADSA)

Wisconsin Association of Area Agencies on Aging (W4A)

Wisconsin Association of Benefit Specialists (WABS)

Wisconsin Association of Nutrition Directors (WAND)

Wisconsin Association of Senior Centers (WASC)

Wisconsin Family and Caregiver Support Alliance (WFACSA)

Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA)

Wisconsin Senior Advocates

Wisconsin Senior Corps Association (WISCA)

Wisconsin Tribal Aging Unit Association

Madison, WI— Members of the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) and citizens from around the state gathered yesterday in Madison to support the seventh annual Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Day. The event provided an opportunity for approximately 200 advocates to discuss with their lawmakers some of the important issues facing Wisconsin's older adults and caregivers. This year, Aging Advocacy Day was a hybrid event, and more than 50 additional advocates will be connecting with their legislators via legislative phone lines.

“The state budget has a significant impact on issues affecting the daily lives of older adults and caregivers across Wisconsin,” said John Schnabl, a member of WAAN’s Leadership Team and Executive Director of the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources. “Constituents shared local data and personal experiences to help legislators understand how key investment decisions affect them.”

The morning was spent in training and education and in the afternoon, advocates met with legislators to discuss the key issues identified by WAAN and asked for their support on the following:

- Increase funding to **Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs)** by \$32.4 million to equalize historical funding disparities, fully fund required contracted services for a growing customer base and provide an additional \$25 million to add critical services to all ADRC operations across the state.
- Create a **Wisconsin state tax credit for family caregivers** (up to \$500) to ease the financial expenses of caregiving.
- Increase Funding for **Respite Service grants** by \$200,000/year so more family caregivers can have access to respite opportunities and assistance to help pay for respite services.
- Create a **Paid Family and Medical Leave program** for Wisconsin to ensure those with access to family leave can afford to use it.
- Establish and fund **minimum provider reimbursement rates** in the Family Care program for home and community-based services.
- Protect vulnerable older adults by increasing the state contribution to **Home-Delivered Meal (HDM) Services** from the current level of \$396,000 to \$5.95 million.
- Increase the **capital and operation assistance program funding for specialized transportation** (s.85.22) by 20% (\$192,000).
- Incorporate annual inflationary increases for **mass transit assistance and specialized transportation assistance for counties and tribes** (s.85.20, s.85.21, and s.85.215 respectively) and create and fund a **dedicated specialized transportation fund to support voting related transportation needs**.
- Create a **dedicated transportation funding source within the Family Care program** for older adults and adults with disabilities.

Contact WAAN

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More details can be found at: <https://gwaar.org/aging-advocacy-day-2023>. WAAN’s State Issue Briefs can be found online at: <https://gwaar.org/waan-issues-and-initiatives>.

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