

Core Member Organizations

- Aging and Disability Professionals Association of Wisconsin (ADPAW)
- Alzheimer’s Association Wisconsin Chapter
- Board on Aging and Long Term Care (BOALTC)
- 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

The Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) works with and for all older adults by educating community members and policy makers on priority issues while advocating for meaningful change.

Agenda

10:00 a.m. — 3:00 p.m



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| 9:00 a.m. | Event Check-in: Best Western Premier Park Hotel
22 S. Carroll St., Madison, WI 53703
*Light morning refreshments will be available. |
| 10:00 a.m. | Advocate training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome/Housekeeping • Briefing on WAAN’s state priority issues • Tips for effective communication with your state legislators • Overview of materials • Announcements |
| 11:00 a.m. | Planning time with others from your Senate district |
| 11:30 a.m. | Lunch and planning time with others from your Assembly district |
| 12:15 p.m. | Walk to the State Capitol (across the street) |
| 12:30 p.m. | Group photo at the State Capitol (MLK Entrance) |
| 1:00 - 2:45 p.m. | Legislative Visits (Senate visits will be scheduled between 1 - 1:45 p.m. & Assembly Representatives between 2 - 2:45 p.m., if possible) |
| 2:15 - 3:00 p.m. | Check-Out and Debriefing (State Capitol, North Hearing Room—2nd Floor, North wing) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn in your Advocacy Day legislative feedback sheets (bright green) and AAD evaluations (yellow). • Check out the resources and activities. • Have a snack! • Visit with other aging advocates from around the state. |

Direct your questions to:
 Janet Zander, GWAAR - janet.zander@gwaar.org or 608-228-7253.

Key Issues for Wisconsin Aging Advocates

2025-2027 State Budget

The Wisconsin 2025-2027 Biennial Budget will significantly impact older adults and caregivers. The Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) advocates for the following key investments which support older adults to improve their health and well-being, live with maximum independence and dignity, and reduce health and long-term care costs.

Our Requests:

1. Aging & Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) - Increase funding to ADRCs by \$19.9 million to equalize historical funding disparities and begin to address the population growth in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin's statewide network of ADRCs provide information about critical, cost-saving services and programs related to aging or living with a disability. An increase in base funding will promote quality of life for all Wisconsin citizens to age in place/at home, delay entry into the long-term care system and position ADRCs to maintain high quality services for a growing population of older adults (projected to grow by 21% from 2020 to 2030) and people with disabilities (projected to grow by 15% from 2020 to 2030).



Last year, ADRCs had over 500,000 contacts with customers throughout the state. For every \$1 invested in Wisconsin's ADRCs, taxpayers save \$3.88. Funding ADRCs will deliver cost-savings for individuals, families, and taxpayers.

2. Caregiver Supports – Increase support for the 580,000 family caregivers in Wisconsin.

There is an increased demand for family caregivers. Wisconsin's growing population of older adults and current shortage of paid direct care workers have added even more pressure to family members who step in to provide necessary care.

To support the important work of these individuals, Wisconsin needs to establish:

- 1. A new Wisconsin caregiver support program, funded at \$5 million annually,** to complement the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP). This new state caregiver program could expand the number of Wisconsin family caregivers currently receiving direct services (4,234 caregivers) by an additional 5,000 caregivers per year.
- 2. A paid family and medical leave program and expand eligibility for the state's current family and medical leave program.**

Many caregivers (approximately 60%) are juggling important caregiving responsibilities while also trying to maintain part- or full-time employment. Caregiving responsibilities force some caregivers to reduce their hours of work, retire early, or step away from the workforce for an undetermined period.

About 77% of workers in the state do not have paid family leave through their jobs, and 62% lack access

Key Issues for Wisconsin Aging Advocates

to unpaid leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave program. Caring for Wisconsin family caregivers saves the state money, helps working caregivers remain in the workforce and provides the supports needed to help sustain them in their caregiving roles.

3. Home-Delivered Meals – Safeguard the well-being and dignity of Wisconsin seniors by increasing the state contribution to Home-Delivered Meal (HDM) Services from the current level of \$868,794 to \$13.5 million annually.

Wisconsin’s home-delivered meal programs are challenged by federal funding cuts, the expiration of COVID funding and flexibilities, unprecedented levels of need, and increased expenses driven by inflation and a lack of resources.



One year of HDM and the services that accompany the meals (social visit, safety check, and connection to other community services) roughly equate to the same cost of one day in the hospital or 10 days in a nursing home. Hunger and isolation are pressing and urgent social issues for Wisconsin’s aging population. Older Americans Act HDMs are an economical and proven means to address senior isolation, hunger, and malnutrition.

In 2023, home-delivered meals programs provided the day’s main meal for approximately 70% of the almost 34,000 program participants. Nearly 1 in 2 of the program participants are identified to have high nutritional risk and over 1 in 4 have incomes below the federal poverty level. This funding increase would enable Wisconsin’s Older Americans Act (OAA) HDM programs to meet the need in their communities and avoid or eliminate the need to establish waiting lists for the program, restrict or limit services in part of their service area, or have areas without service at all.

4. Healthy Aging Grants - Support a state investment of \$450,000 per year to fund the researched and proven strategies that give older people, their families, and caregivers the tools to protect their health and wellness.

Preventing Older Adult Falls

Falls are the number one cause of injuries in older adults and are a key driver of emergency department (ED) visits, hospitalizations, and nursing home admissions.



- One in four older adults has a fall each year and, sadly, Wisconsin has the highest rate of deadly falls in the nation. Yet, there is no state investment in falls prevention.
- An estimated \$1 billion is spent annually on falls-related health costs in Wisconsin which includes both Medicaid and out-of-pocket expenses.

Key Issues for Wisconsin Aging Advocates

- Falls have a major impact on emergency medical services (EMS) and health care providers. Nearly one in five EMS responses were for older adult falls, making falls the top injury response in 2022.
- The number of falls that EMS responds to are increasing by nearly 10,000 a year statewide.

State investment in Healthy Aging Grants will support the long-term sustainability of the Falls Free Wisconsin effort and expand access to Stepping On and other programs to reach more people and reduce falls – all while reducing the burden and costs to health care and public safety.

5. Transportation - Increase funding for specialized transportation services to support the health, well-being, financial security, independence, and community engagement of Wisconsinites who do not drive.

Specialized transportation assistance s.85.21/s.85.215

The annual s.85.21 allocation has not increased in the last five years. From 2000 to 2022 the population of adults age 60 and older has increased by 67% (from 909,367 to over 1.5 million).



Lack of funding and a growing number of non-drivers is causing specialized transportation programs to make service cuts, limit passenger rides, and/or deny transportation all together. **To ensure future expansion and maintenance of services,**

- 1. Increase specialized transportation funding by 10%, approximately \$1.6 million/annually for s.85.21 (counties) and \$43,560/annually for s.85.215 (tribes) and incorporate annual inflationary increases for both programs.**

Specialized transportation assistance – s.85.22

Federal (5310 and state specialize transportation program (s.85.22) funding provides grant for capital and operating projects that improve the mobility of older adults and people with disabilities. Program funding requests continually exceed the available funding, resulting in some projects not being funded and other receiving partial funding awards. **To assist with operations, replacement or acquisition of new transit vehicles and expand mobility management services for non-drivers,**

- 2. Increasing the capital and operation assistance program funding for specialized transportation (s.85.22) by 20% (\$220,580).**

Specialized transportation infrastructure is critical for the non-driving public, economic growth, and overall quality of life.

Invest in Aging and Disability Resource Centers

Balance Funding Across the State and Meet the Needs of Wisconsin’s Growing Population of Older Adults and People with Disabilities.

Wisconsin’s Statewide network of ADRCs provide information about critical, cost saving services and programs related to aging or living with a disability. They serve individuals, family members, friends and professionals working with related issues. The state’s 46 ADRCs and seven tribal Aging and Disability Resource Specialists (ADRS) that work at an ADRC serve the fastest growing demographic of our state’s population.¹

WAAN’s position: Increase funding for Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) by \$19.9 million in the 2025-2027 biennial state budget to continue to address the funding inequities between ADRCs and begin to address the population growth in Wisconsin.

The current funding formula does not fully address the funding disparities between ADRCs. In addition, it has never addressed the changing demographics and rising expenses impacting operations. As a result, Wisconsin’s network of ADRCs includes underfunded operations unable to provide equitable levels of services.²

	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% Change 2020 to 2030
60-64	313,825	371,940	414,895	413,495	362,275	-13%
65-69	227,029	295,185	352,625	394,550	394,370	+12%
70-74	173,467	207,400	272,405	326,790	366,910	+34%
75-79	141,252	150,335	182,195	240,540	290,250	+59%
80-84	117,061	113,175	122,575	149,890	199,680	+63%
85+	118,505	128,825	134,130	145,745	173,110	+29%

The Wisconsin population age 60 and older is projected to grow at unprecedented rates - 21% increase from 2020 to 2030.³

Over the past 12 years, the baseline request for funding ADRC services was increased on only one occasion, by \$5.1 million in the Wisconsin 2023-2025 biennial budget. While the \$5.1 million increase in the last budget provided some relief to maintain ADRC operations, the current cost to continue operations and meet the growing demand for services far exceeds the 2024 appropriation.

Projected with Disability- 2018-22 Rates by Population					
Age Group	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
0-17	56,465	57,552	58,631	59,000	58,289
18-59	286,337	284,585	287,349	290,263	289,613
60-74	201,933	220,362	218,172	204,087	193,331
75-84	109,163	139,845	175,485	204,360	217,127
85+	89,584	97,342	115,619	149,771	189,414
Total	743,482	799,687	855,255	907,481	947,773
All Ages Dis rate	12.4%	12.9%	13.4%	14.0%	14.6%

The Wisconsin population with a disability is projected to grow by 15% from 2020 to 2030.³

Funding inequities among ADRCs contribute to an inconsistent approach to delivering required state-contracted services and the need to determine the amount of funding necessary to ensure every ADRC can provide all contractually required services.

To provide reliable, equitable and accurate funding to the state’s ADRCs, factoring in the costs of addressing population growth and rising expenses, an increased investment of \$19.9 million is needed.

Funding ADRCs will deliver cost savings for individuals, families, and taxpayers.

In 2023, ADRCs had a total of 536,627 contacts with customers throughout the state.⁴ There is a significant return of investment as result of the array of services ADRCs offer the Wisconsin taxpayer. In 2023, the total return on investment was measured at 388%, meaning for every dollar invested in ADRCs taxpayers save \$3.88.^{5, 6, 7}

A \$19.9 million increase in base funding will promote quality of life for all Wisconsin citizens to age in place/at home, delay entry into the long-term care system and position ADRCs to maintain high quality services.

Sources:

1. U.S. Census Bureau (2020, June 25). 65 and Older population Grows Rapidly as Baby Boomers Age. Retrieved March 16, 2021, from <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2020/65-older-population-grows.html>.
2. Aging Populations Projections, www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/aging/demographics.htm.
3. ADRC Reinvestment Workgroup
4. ADRC statewide encounter data for CY2023
5. Return on Investment calculation is based on number of prevented hospital readmissions and emergency department visits per 1,000 ADRC customers served.
6. The Agency for Healthcare Quality and Research report: https://www.hcup-us.ahrq.gov/reports/statbriefs/sb248-Hospital-Readmissions-2010-2016.jsp?utm_source=ahrq&utm_medium=en13&utm_term=Safety_Program&utm_content=13&utm_campaign=ahrq_en6_18_2019
7. Costs of Emergency Department Visits in the United States, 2017: <https://www.hcupus.ahrq.gov/reports/statbriefs/sb268-ED-Costs-2017.jsp#:~:text=In%202017%2C%20aggregate%20ED%20visit,cost%20per%20visit%20of%20%24530>



Caring for Wisconsin's Caregivers

The key to remaining independent, engaged and connected

In Wisconsin, 580,000 family caregivers are providing approximately **\$9.2 billion** in unpaid care filling an essential role in our fractured long-term services and supports (LTSS) system. These families could be siblings banding together to care for an aging parent, parents caring for their child who has a disability, a partner struggling to support a loved one with dementia or one of the roughly 32% of grandparents nationally who are responsible for raising their grandchildren.

Family and friends take on these caregiving roles out of love and out of need. Did you know that most private health insurance plans do **not** cover the costs of respite care, assisted living, or other in-home care? There is also a paid workforce crisis, with more than one in four direct caregiver positions vacant! Meaning, more and more, family needs to step in to provide the necessary care.

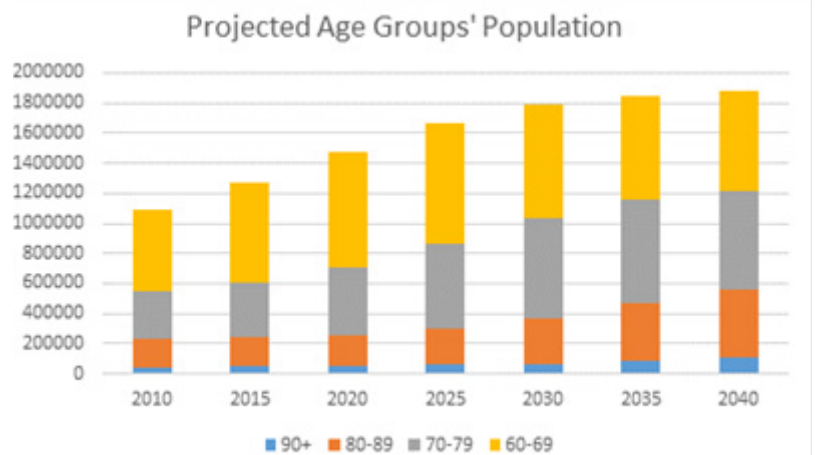
Keep in mind that many caregivers are juggling these important responsibilities while trying to maintain part-time or full-time employment. In fact, in 2014, 60% of family caregivers had full- or part-time jobs in addition to their caregiving roles. Caregiving responsibilities have forced some to reduce hours at work, retire early, or step away from the workforce altogether.

The caregiving strain will only increase with time. One in seven current non-caregivers expect to become caregivers within 2 years. And by 2050 in Wisconsin, there will be fewer than three family caregivers to care for each family member older than 80. All of these statistics tell us we need to do more to prepare! Caregiver issues will impact every Wisconsinite, whether we are the ones receiving care or the ones providing the care. We need to have an infrastructure in place to meet this demand.

There's good news! According to Federal Reporting data for 2023, the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP) offered direct services to 4,234 Wisconsin family caregivers. Each caregiver received some sort of necessary support ranging from respite care, transportation, assistive technology, in-home care, or other services. **In Wisconsin, we can do more!**

WAAN's position: There is an increased demand for family caregivers. To support the important work of these individuals, Wisconsin needs to establish:

1. A new Wisconsin caregiver support program to complement the National Family Caregiver Support Program funded at \$5 million annually, and
2. A paid family and medical leave program and expand eligibility for the state's current family and medical leave program.



1. Establish a new Wisconsin caregiver support program to complement the National Family Caregiver Support Program, funded at \$5 million annually.

Legislation establishing this new program should include caregivers of those adults 60 and older, or who have dementia, or older relatives (not parents)

age 55 and older providing care to children under the age of 18; and older relatives, including parents, age 55 and older providing care to adults ages 18-59 with disabilities who reside in their own homes or community settings.⁹ With this state caregiver program, we could directly support more than 5,000 additional caregivers next year!

Most working people in the United States do not have paid family leave through their jobs,¹⁰ including about 77 percent — about 2.4 million workers — in Wisconsin.

Most working people in the United States do not have paid family leave through their jobs,¹⁰ including about 77 percent — about 2.4 million workers — in Wisconsin. Even unpaid leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act is inaccessible for 62 percent of Wisconsinites.¹¹

2. Establish a paid family and medical leave program and expand eligibility for the state's current family and medical leave program.

Offering paid family and medical leave encourages people looking for a job, to get a job; helps to address the direct caregiver crisis; and helps to support working family caregivers. According to a Gallup Poll, “The cost of replacing an individual employee can range from one-half to two times the employee’s annual salary.”¹² The cost of maintaining an employee who takes leave is far less costly to an employer.

A majority of legislators from all parties polled by Marquette University Law School in November [2022] favored paid leave.¹³

These additional supports are needed to reduce the strain and recognize the important work of family caregivers.

Sources for this issue brief can be viewed at: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewfile/id/2008154>

Find this and other WAAN issue briefs at: <https://gwaar.org/issues-and-initiatives>

Safeguard Nutrition Support for Wisconsin Seniors

Older Wisconsinites need your help.

Budget Request: Protect vulnerable older adults by increasing the state contribution to Home-Delivered Meal (HDM) Services from the current level of \$868,794¹ to \$13.5 million annually. This increase would enable Wisconsin’s Older Americans Act (OAA) HDM programs to meet the need in their communities

Wisconsin is home to over 1.5 million older adults (ages 60+).² This equates to one of every four Wisconsin residents! The OAA HDM program is a proven, effective way to support Wisconsin’s most vulnerable older adults and their caregivers:

“The program helped me keep my husband out of the nursing home for all but one year of his life.”
Program Recipient

“My mom is 100 years old; your program is a lifesaver.”
Caregiver of Program Recipient

HDM services provide access to nutritious food, social visits, safety checks and connection to other community services to older adults in the most social and economic need. In 2023, **home-delivered meals programs provided the day’s main meal for approximately 70% of the almost 34,000 program participants. Nearly 1 in 2 of the program participants are identified to have high nutritional risk and over 1 in 4 have incomes below the federal poverty level.**³

The services and resources older adults receive from the program play a crucial role in enabling people to live more nourished and independent lives in their homes, avoiding costly long-term care (LTC) institutions or worsened health outcomes.

One year of home delivered meals and the services that accompany it roughly equates to the same cost of one day in the hospital or 10 days in the nursing home.⁴

Fifteen percent (8) of the 54 HDM programs responding to a 2024 survey indicated they either have a waiting list or are at capacity and anticipate having one soon; however, waiting lists only tell part of the story. Over 90% (48) of respondents reported they have implemented some restrictions and limited services in part of their service area (reduced the number of days of hot delivery and/or reduced the number of frozen meals provided) or have areas of the county/tribe without service.

WAAN’s position: Hunger and isolation are pressing and urgent social issues for Wisconsin’s aging population. Older Americans Act Home-Delivered Meals (HDM) are an economical and proven means to address senior isolation, hunger, and malnutrition. **This program needs \$13.5 million annually to meet the need across the state.**

Wisconsin Older Adults are at Elevated Risk!



1 in 4 Live Alone (26.3%)

“Your meal program is a blessing to me. I am elderly and live alone. Don’t have any family close by”

~40% Live in a Rural Area
“[Helps me] have a sense of connection in our enclosed, small, lonely world”



1 in 10 Experience Limited or Uncertain Access to Adequate Food
“This is my only meal since FoodShare only gives me \$13 a month.”

1 in 5 Report Fair to Poor Health (20.8%)
“We were very depressed with no routine and running out of ideas for the microwave and losing weight fast. Thank you so much.”



More than Half Report 3+ Chronic Conditions
“I can’t cook anymore. Had a stroke I can get confused when cooking.”

1 in 4 Have a Disability (25.5%)
“I am blind and not able to cook at all.”



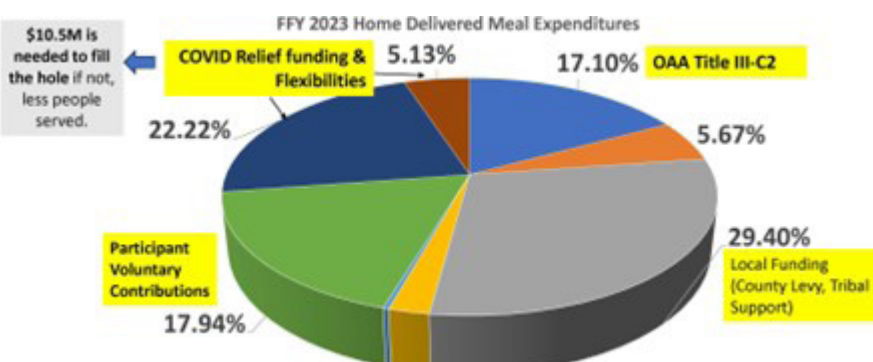
Wisconsin ranks 8th nationwide for social isolation risk for adults aged 65+.
“Reminds me to eat, social contact friendly face on a low day.”

-HDM Recipients Surveyed in 2023

The program is **challenged** by:

- **Federal Funding Cuts:** The Older Americans Act Nutrition Program sustained an \$8 million cut at the federal level in 2024. Local funding, (29% of the funding in 2023) is also at risk.⁵

- **Expiration of COVID Support (both funding and flexibilities):** By 2025, Wisconsin's HDM program will have lost approximately \$10.5 million of COVID-relief accounting for over 27% of total HDM expenditures in 2023.



- **Unprecedented Levels of Need:** Demand for services has increased by 54% from 2019 to 2023.⁶
- **Increased Expenses driven by Inflation and a Lack of Resources:** The average cost to provide a meal statewide is \$12.76/meal, a 17% increase over 2018 costs.⁶ Over a third (36%) of programs surveyed indicated they are unable to service their entire geographic area due to lack of funding, insufficient volunteers or staff, or inadequate equipment to safely deliver a meal.

In 2023, only 17% of HDM funding came from the OAA. Although voluntary contributions from participants matched Older Americans Act dollars in 2023 (approx. 17% each), they are decreasing due to lack of income. Approximately, 42% of single older adult households and 20% of two-person older adult households in partnerships in Wisconsin lack the funds needed to pay for basic living needs.⁷ These financial challenges further exacerbate the strain on our programs and highlight the urgent need for increased support and funding.

The ability to access these crucial services in a timely and consistent manner is KEY to the program's successful intervention to support the health and independence of older adults. **We urge you to prioritize funding and support for the OAA Home Delivered Meals Program in our state. Join us in safeguarding the well-being and dignity of our seniors by ensuring they have continued access to these essential programs!**

Sources for this issue brief can be viewed at: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewfile/id/2008155>

Find this and other WAAN issue briefs at: <https://gwaar.org/issues-and-initiatives>

Reducing Falls Among Older Adults in Wisconsin

Saving Lives, Preserving Independence, Reducing Costs

The Scope and Cost of Older Adult Falls:

Scope: Nationally, one in four older adults experiences a fall each year, but Wisconsin has the nation's highest rate of deadly falls among older adults.¹ Many assume Wisconsin's high death rate is due to the state's cold climate, but the majority of older adult falls occur in the home, and some states with similar climates have lower rates.¹ From 2018-2020, there were 4,986 deaths due to falls among the 65+ population in Wisconsin – nearly triple the number of people of all ages who died in motor vehicle accidents in the same period.² The falls death rate rose 15% over that time period, while the nationwide rate increased by 11%.² With the state's population aging, the problem is expected to grow.

An estimated \$1 billion is spent annually on falls in Wisconsin which includes both Medicaid and out-of-pocket expenses.³

Health impact and cost: Falls are a common cause of injury and disability. Ninety-five percent of hip fractures in older adults – a common cause of both long-term nursing home admissions and rehabilitation stays – are due to falls.¹ In Wisconsin, the median monthly cost for a semi-private room in a nursing home \$9,022.⁴ Likewise, falls and their related injuries have a significant physical and financial impact on family caregivers. An AARP study revealed that family caregivers spend an average of \$7,242 annually on out-of-pocket costs related to caregiving.⁵

Strain on emergency services and health care: Fall-related calls have major implications for emergency medical services (EMS) availability as it can decrease well as financial consequences to communities and decreases the availability of EMS to respond to more urgent needs. According to the National Council on Aging, older adult falls (people aged 65 and older) accounted for 17% of all 911 calls some of which required transport to an emergency department while others simply required a lift assist.¹ Half of the calls requiring lift-assist resulted in a second lift-assist call within two weeks.²

Reducing Falls in Wisconsin:

The good news is we know how to reduce falls in Wisconsin. Wisconsin's Department of Health Services (DHS) in partnership with the non-profit Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA) is poised to address the falls epidemic with the Falls Free Wisconsin Center – a statewide effort launched in 2023 to reduce falls in Wisconsin by creating a one-stop-shop for consumers, their families, and caregivers and the professionals who support them. The Center engages in the following:

WAAN's position: To reduce the high rate of deadly falls among older adults in Wisconsin, **we request a \$450,000 annual state budget appropriation to support the Falls Free Wisconsin Center** – a falls prevention center of excellence that

1. raises awareness of the incidence and cost of older adult falls,
2. helps older adults, their families and caregivers identify and reduce falls risk due to the multiple causes of falls,
3. reduces the burden of falls and provides resources to emergency services and health systems, and
4. delivers evidence-based prevention education and interventions across the state.

- **Raising Awareness:** Public education campaigns run periodically throughout the year to help older adults, their families, and caregivers better understand the risk of falls and how they can prevent them;
- Develop and maintain the **infrastructure to support implementation** of evidence-based falls-prevention programs and initiatives throughout the state;
- **Identifying people at high falls risk:** We work to encourage clinical and falls risk self-assessments and provide resources for both clinical and community-based interventions;
- Support local falls-prevention coalitions and initiatives;
- Support Aging & Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs), county and tribal aging units, public health, and other local partners in developing and training program leaders and recruiting participants;
- Develop and maintain an online hub of **falls-prevention information and resources** for consumers and community organizations;
- **Share data:** We collect and analyze data to support provide partners and the public with accurate information about the scope and impact of falls.

Raise Awareness:

Identify People at Risk of a Fall Through Screening. According to the CDC, the rising number of deaths from falls among older adults can be addressed “by screening for fall risk and intervening to address risk factors.”

Increase Accessibility of Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Interventions: WIHA’s evidenced-based Stepping On program has been researched and proven to reduce falls by 31%, with an average participant cost savings of \$345.40.⁶ In another study, program participants experienced a 50% reduction in emergency department visits and a 50% reduction in fall-related hospitalizations.⁷ In addition to delivering Stepping On, WIHA is a clearinghouse for other evidence-based programs and practices related to chronic disease, pain, incontinence, diabetes, and other physical conditions that increase the risk of falls.

WIHA partners with Wisconsin’s Aging and Disability Network, health care systems and the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health to train local agencies statewide to reduce fall-related injuries and deaths. **However, WIHA’s local partners cannot deliver proven cost-effective programs without statewide coordination and support.**

Although these proven falls prevention programs save lives and reduce long-term care costs, they are cost-prohibitive for individual county or tribal Aging & Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs), Aging Units, or health care systems to implement without financial support. Local coalitions are working across Wisconsin to pull together resources and strategies to reduce falls in their communities, but they cannot succeed with their work in isolation.

Sources for this issue brief can be viewed at: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008079>

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Support Increased Funding for Specialized Transportation

Invest in specialized transportation assistance to meet the needs of older adults and individuals with disabilities

Specialized transportation assistance – s.85.21/s.85.215

The annual 85.21 (specialized transportation assistance for counties) allocation has not increased in the last five years. From 2000 to 2022 the 60+ population increased from 909,367 to 1,519,222, a 67% increase. This trend means that **the demand for specialized transportation will continue to grow.**

Source: US Census, Population Estimates Program 2000-2022.

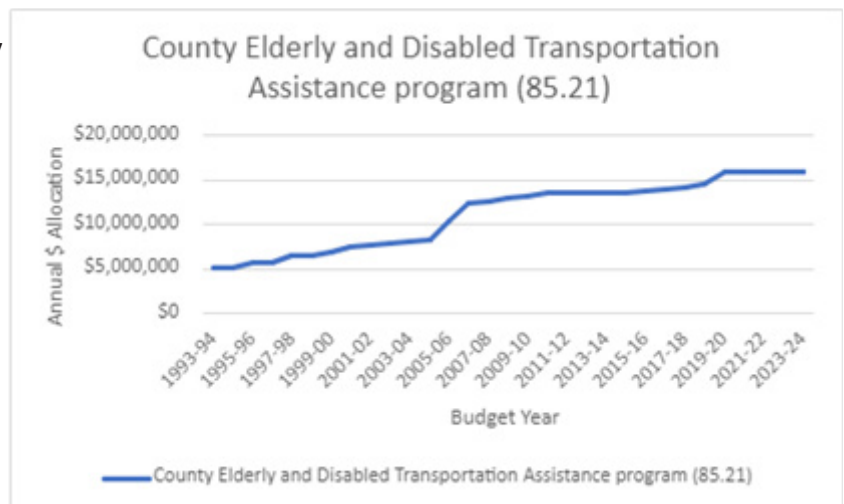
Programs are making service cuts, limiting passenger rides, and/or denying transportation all together.

1. **Increase specialized transportation funding by 10%, approximately \$1.6 million/annually for s.85.21 (counties) and \$43,560/annually for s.85.215 (tribes) and incorporate annual inflationary increases for both programs to ensure future expansion and maintenance of services.**

These programs provide financial assistance to counties and tribes providing transportation services for seniors and/or individuals with disabilities of any age, who would not otherwise have an available or accessible method of transportation, and thereby improve and promote the maintenance of human dignity and self-sufficiency.

WAAN's position: Increase funding for specialized transportation services to support the health, well-being, financial security, independence, and community engagement of Wisconsinites who do not drive by:

1. Increasing specialized transportation funding by 10%, approximately \$1.6 million/annually for s.85.21 (counties) and \$43,560/annually for s.85.215 (tribes) and incorporate annual inflationary increases for both programs to ensure future expansion and maintenance of services, and
2. Increasing the capital and operation assistance program funding for specialized transportation (s.85.22) by 20% (\$220,580) to assist with operations, replacement or acquisition of new transit vehicles and expand mobility management services to meet the needs of non-drivers as they age.



Specialized transportation assistance – s.85.22

The Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program grants capital and operating projects that improve the mobility of seniors and individuals with disabilities by using federal (5310) and state Specialized Transportation Program (s.85.22) funding.

In 2024, there were 90 applications requesting \$12,694,941 funds for 121 projects. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) provided \$1,244,450 out of \$2,032,846 requested to fund 18 Mobility Management projects at 64.3% of total project expenses. WisDOT also provided \$1,620,760 out of \$2,910,848 requested to fund 22 Operating projects at 56% of the total project expenses. All 5310 projects require a minimum local match. The above percentages indicate the amount WisDOT awarded out of the applicant's funding request and do not include the additional local match required of applicants. WisDOT awarded 29 vehicles at 70% of the total vehicle cost totaling \$2,367,581 of the \$7,751,247 requested. The applicant is responsible for paying the remaining 30% of the total vehicle cost.

Program funding requests continually exceed the available funding, resulting in some projects not being funded and others receiving partial funding awards. Consequently, programs supporting non-drivers had to make cuts to service, limit the number of trips per individual or deny transportation all together.

2. Increase the capital and operation assistance program funding for specialized transportation (s.85.22) by 20% (\$220,580) to assist with operations, replacement or acquisition of new transit vehicles and expand mobility management services needed for non-drivers.

The specialized transportation infrastructure is critical for the non-driving public, economic growth, and overall quality of life. Specialized transportation funding and coordination:

- Supports family caregivers by enabling them to remain employed and reducing lost productivity.
- Drives economic growth by increasing livability through infrastructure investment.
- Provides access to preventive and routine healthcare.
- Reduces household costs with alternatives to buying and maintaining a personal vehicle.
- Promotes independence by increasing access to community resources.
- Increases socialization by providing opportunities to engage in the community.
- Reduces isolation and increases contact with individuals who live alone.



Find this and other WAAN issue briefs at: <https://gwaar.org/issues-and-initiatives>

Tips for Visiting Your Legislators

What to do before the visit

- Look at the legislative folder(s) to verify the time and location of your legislative visits at the State Capitol.
- Use the morning Assembly and Senate district meetings to introduce yourself to other advocates in your group and determine who will cover each portion of the legislative visit – introduction, WAAN positions/requests, personal story, additional information/follow-up (if needed), and thank you. (Note: some legislative visits may have only one advocate while others will have a large group of advocates involved).

What to do during your visit

- Be on time and polite.
- Introduce yourself (identify yourself as a constituent).
- Thank the legislator and/or staff member for the meeting. Address your legislator with the proper title – Representative (Last name) or Senator (Last name).
- Stay focused.
- Present the WAAN legislative packet. Highlight the WAAN positions/requests.
- Share a personal story related to one of the WAAN priorities.
- Ask if there is any additional information or materials they require.
- Honor the time limit.

No matter how much (or how little) time you have for your visit, remember to include the **four essential components**:

1. **Who are you?**
2. **What is your issue?**
3. **Why is your issue important?**
4. **What do you want the elected official to do about it?**

What to do after your visit

- Complete WAAN's Legislative Feedback form and drop it in the box in the North Hearing Room.
- Notify WAAN of any immediate follow-up information requested during your meeting.
- Send a brief thank-you note as soon after your visit as possible. Remind your legislator of your concerns and mention that you look forward to seeing him/her act on the requests.
- Keep up the relationship! Keep track of your legislator's actions on your issues. When he or she sponsors a piece of legislation you agree with, send a thank-you email. If you don't see him/her acting on the issues you discussed during your meeting, make a follow-up call or write a note reminding him or her of the importance.

Wisconsin State Senate

Office and Phone Directory

	SENATOR	PHONE	ROOM
(D-16)	AGARD, Melissa	6-9170	3 South
(R-14)	BALLWEG, Joan	6-0751	409 South
(R-28)	BRADLEY, Julian	6-5400	316 South
(R-19)	CABRAL-GUEVARA, Rachael	6-0718	323 South
(D-3)	CARPENTER, Tim	6-8535	109 South
(R-2)	COWLES, Robert	6-0484	118 South
(R-12)	FELZKOWSKI, Mary	6-2509	415 South
(R-18)	FEYEN, Daniel	6-5300	306 South
(D-27)	HESELBEIN, Dianne	6-6670	206 South
(R-5)	HUTTON, Rob	6-2512	313 South
(R-1)	JACQUE, André	6-3512	7 South
(R-13)	JAGLER, John	6-5660	131 South
(R-23)	JAMES, Jesse	6-7511	319 South
(D-6)	JOHNSON, LaTonya	6-2500	106 South
(R-33)	KAPENGA, Chris	6-9174	220 South
(R-8)	KNODL, Dan	6-5830	108 South
(D-7)	LARSON, Chris	6-7505	20 South
(R-9)	LEMAHIEU, Devin	6-2056	211 South
(R-17)	MARKLEIN, Howard	6-0703	316 East
(R-11)	NASS, Steve	6-2635	10 South
(D-32)	PFAFF, Brad	6-5490	22 South
(R-25)	QUINN, Romaine Robert	6-3510	123 South
(D-26)	ROYS, Kelda	6-1627	130 South
(D-31)	SMITH, Jeff	6-8546	19 South
(D-15)	SPREITZER, Mark	6-2253	126 South
(R-10)	STAFSHOLT, Rob	6-7745	15 South
(R-20)	STROEBEL, Duey	6-7513	18 South
(D-4)	VACANT	6-5810	5 South
(R-24)	TESTIN, Patrick	6-3123	8 South
(R-29)	TOMCZYK, Cory	6-2502	310 South
(R-21)	WANGGAARD, Van H.	6-1832	122 South
(R-30)	WIMBERGER, Eric	6-5670	104 South
(D-22)	WIRCH, Robert	7-8979	127 South

Direct all Senate Correspondence to:
 PO BOX 7882, MADISON, WI 53707-7882
 Effective 5/6/2024

Note: All phone numbers are in the 608 area code and preceded by numbers 26.

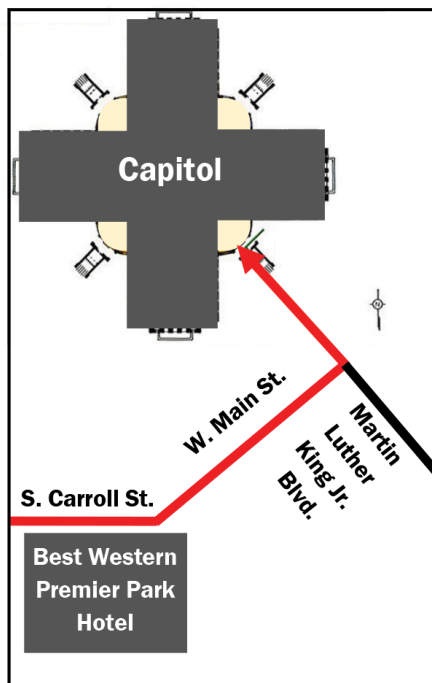
<u>REPRESENTATIVE</u>	<u>ROOM</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>REPRESENTATIVE</u>	<u>ROOM</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
ALLEN, Scott (R-97)	105-West	9197	MOORE OMOKUNDE, Supreme (D-17)	8-North	9117
ANDERSON, Clinton (D-45)	17-North	9145	MOSES, Clint (R-29)	12-West	9129
ANDERSON, Jimmy (D-47)	9-North	9147	MURPHY, Dave (R-56)	318-North	9156
ANDRACA, Deb (D-23)	109-North	9123	MURSAU, Jeffrey (R-36)	113-West	9136
ARMSTRONG, David (R-75)	220-North	9175	MYERS, LaKeshia (D-12)	6-North	9112
AUGUST, Tyler (R-32)	115-West	6-2401	NEDWESKI, Amanda (R-61)	7-West	9161
BALDEH, Samba (D-48)	111-North	9148	NEUBAUER, Greta (D-66)	201-West	9166
BARE, Mike (D-80)	306-West	9180	NEYLON, Adam (R-98)	204-North	9198
BEHNKE, Elijah (R-89)	308-North	9189	NOVAK, Todd (R-51)	310-North	9151
BILLINGS, Jill (D-95)	118-North	9195	O'CONNOR, Jerry (R-52)	17-West	9152
BINSFELD, Amy (R-27)	418-North	9127	OHNSTAD, Tod (D-65)	128-North	9165
BODDEN, Ty (R-59)	304-North	9159	OLDENBURG, Loren (R-96)	10-West	9196
BORN, Mark (R-39)	308-East	9139	ORTIZ-VELEZ, Sylvia (D-8)	307-West	9108
BRANDTJEN, Janel (R-22)	4-West	9122	PALMERI, Lori (D-54)	5-North	9154
BROOKS, Robert (R-60)	216-North	9160	PENTERMAN, William (R-37)	207-North	9137
CABRERA, Marisabel (D-9)	18-North	9109	PETERSEN, Kevin (R-40)	309-North	9140
CALLAHAN, Calvin (R-35)	15-West	9135	PETRYK, Warren (R-93)	103-West	9193
CLANCY, Ryan (D-19)	21-North	9119	PLUMER, Jon (R-42)	315-North	9142
CONLEY, Sue (D-44)	320-West	9144	PRONSHINSKE, Treig (R-92)	127-West	9192
CONSIDINE, Dave (D-81)	303-West	9181	RATCLIFF, Melissa (D-46)	11-North	9146
DALLMAN, Alex (R-41)	321-East	9141	RETTINGER, Nik (R-83)	8-West	9183
DITTRICH, Barbara (R-38)	317-North	9138	RIEMER, Daniel (D-7)	104-North	9107
DONOVAN, Bob (R-84)	3-North	9184	RODRIGUEZ, Jessie (R-21)	306-East	9121
DOYLE, Steve (D-94)	124-North	9194	ROZAR, Donna (R-69)	13-West	9169
DRAKE, Dora (D-11)	19-North	9111	SAPIK, Angie (R-73)	16-West	9173
DUCHOW, Cindi (R-99)	210-North	9199	SCHMIDT, Peter (R-6)	409-North	9106
EDMING, James (R-87)	129-West	9187	SCHRAA, Michael (R-53)	107-West	9153
EMERSON, Jodi (D-91)	322-West	9191	SCHUTT, Ellen (R-31)	316-North	9131
GOEBEN, Joy (R-5)	209-North	9105	SHANKLAND, Katrina (D-71)	304-West	9171
GOYKE, Evan (D-18)	112-North	9118	SHELTON, Kristina (D-90)	126-North	9190
GREEN, Chanz (R-74)	125-West	9174	SINICKI, Christine (D-20)	114-North	9120
GUNDRUM, Rick (R-58)	312-North	9158	SNODGRASS, Lee (D-57)	120-North	9157
GUSTAFSON, Nate (R-55)	420-North	9155	SNYDER, Pat (R-85)	307-North	9185
HAYWOOD, Kalan (D-16)	119-North	9116	SORTWELL, Shae (R-2)	214-North	9102
HONG, Francesca (D-76)	122-North	9176	SPIROS, John (R-86)	212-North	9186
HURD, Karen (R-68)	15-North	9168	STEFFEN, David (R-4)	323-North	9104
JACOBSON, Jenna (D-43)	11-North	9143	STUBBS, Shelia (D-77)	7-North	9177
JOERS, Alex (D-79)	20-North	9179	SUBECK, Lisa (D-78)	113-North	9178
JOHNSON, Scott (R-33)	109-West	9133	SUMMERFIELD, Rob (R-67)	119-West	9167
KATSMA, Terry (R-26)	304-East	9126	SWEARINGEN, Rob (R-34)	123-West	9134
KITCHENS, Joel (R-1)	314-North	9101	TITTL, Paul (R-25)	218-North	9125
KRUG, Scott (R-72)	223-North	9172	TRANEL, Travis (R-49)	302-North	9149
KURTZ, Tony (R-50)	320-East	9150	TUSLER, Ron (R-3)	22-West	9103
MACCO, John (R-88)	208-North	9188	VANDER MEER, Nancy (R-70)	11-West	9170
MADISON, Darrin (D-10)	21-North	9110	VINING, Robyn (D-14)	107-North	9114
MAGNAFICI, Gae (R-28)	221-North	9128	VOS, Robin (R-63)	217-West	6-3387
MAXEY, Dave (R-15)	412-North	9115	WICHGERS, Chuck (R-82)	306-North	9182
MCGUIRE, Tip (D-64)	321-West	9164	WITTKKE, Robert (R-62)	18-West	9162
MELOTIK, Paul (R-24)	219-North	9124	ZIMMERMAN, Shannon (R-30)	324-East	9130
MICHALSKI, Tom (R-13)	9-West	9113			

Assembly Mailing Address: PO Box 8952 (Reps A-L) or PO Box 8953 (Reps M-Z), Madison, WI 53708

E-Mail Address: Rep.(insert last name)@legis.wisconsin.gov

How do I get to the group photo entrance?

Go out the front of the hotel onto S. Carroll St., then walk to your right along W. Main St. Turn left to the Capitol entrance at Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.



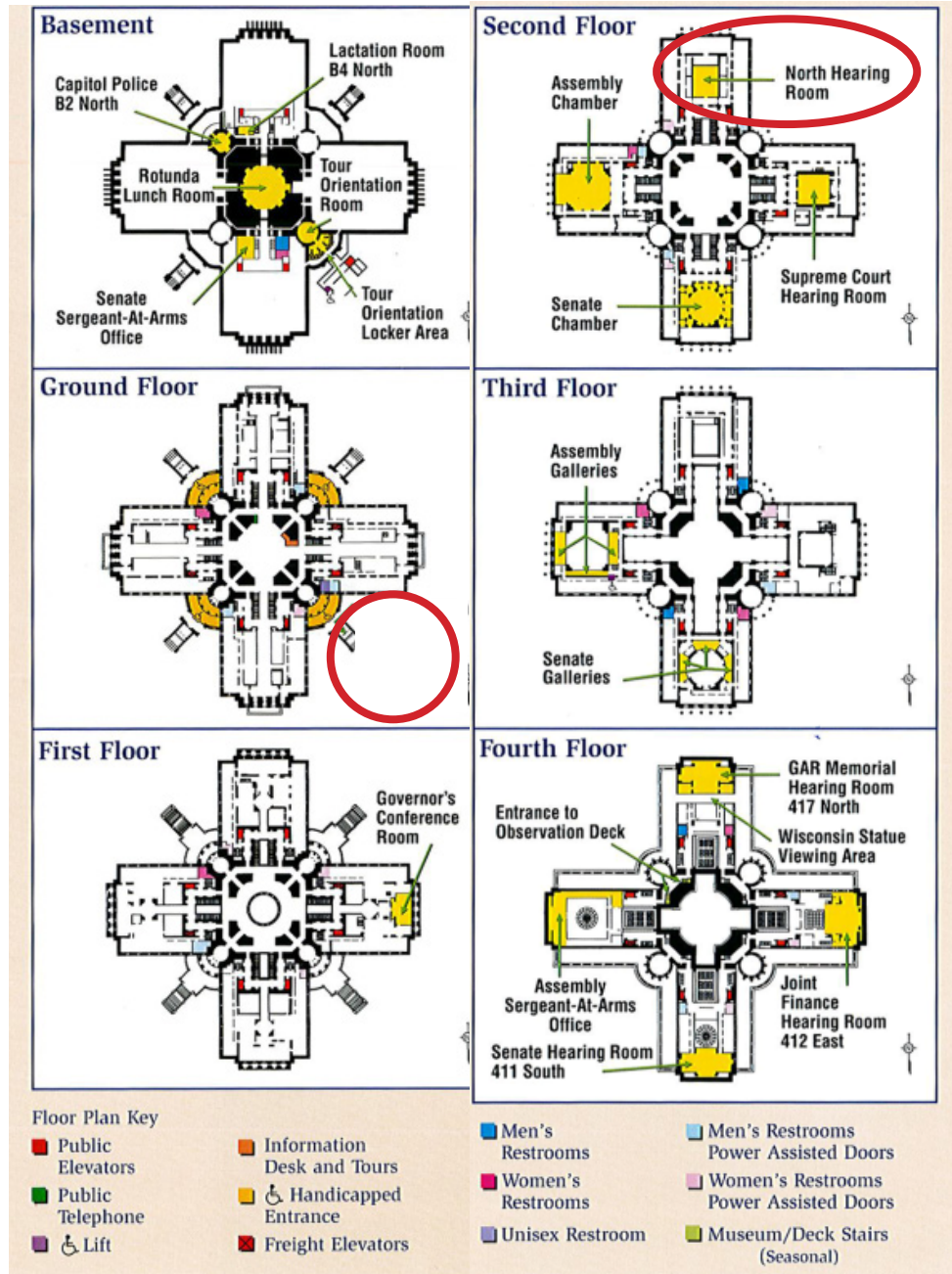
How do I find my meeting room or legislator's office?

Identify the office number for the visit. (Example 201 N)

The letter "N, S, E, or W" will tell you which hallway the office or meeting room is in: North, South, East or West. From the center of the Capitol on the ground floor (which is the one you will enter the building on) you can find the hallway directions by looking at the white globe lights above the four main hallways – which will be marked north, south, east, and west.

The first number of the room is the floor.

Examples: Room 20 S is on the ground floor, south wing. Room 113 W is on the first floor in the west wing.



WAN Advocacy Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Day

Wisconsin Aging
| Advocacy | Network

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Aging and Disability Professionals Association of Wisconsin (ADPAW) • Alzheimer's Association SE Wisconsin Chapter • TMG
UAW Milwaukee Metropolitan Retiree Council • Wisconsin Adult Day Services Association (WADSA)
Wisconsin Association of Nutrition Directors (WAND) • Wisconsin Association of Senior Centers (WASC)



Help support future WAAN advocacy activities and events

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. WAAN advocates for all older adults by educating the community and policy makers on issues impacting older adults; mobilizing people on priority issues; and advocating for change.

The Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc. (GWAAR) is the fiscal administrator for WAAN. GWAAR is a 501c3 non-profit, so any financial contributions to GWAAR on behalf of WAAN, are tax deductible. Financial donations are graciously accepted to support WAAN activities and events, such as Aging Advocacy Day, local and statewide training, and advocacy action alert distribution.

*Donations made payable to GWAAR, to support WAAN, can be sent to:
GWAAR, Attn: Fiscal Staff
1414 MacArthur Road, Suite A
Madison, WI 53714*

**Please put "WAAN" in the memo portion of your check.*