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People first Wisconsin hopes for the right vote on Family Care and IRIS

As the largest statewide organization representing people with disabilities, People First Wisconsin shares this statement before major votes on programs that people with disabilities rely upon.

This week the joint finance committee will vote on Family Care and IRIS. Our members use these programs to continue living and working in the community. Our members do not want to live in nursing homes or institutions.

We have been worried about a plan for for-profit out-of-state insurance companies to come into Wisconsin to run these programs. These companies do not have experience offering community supports to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We are worried that people with disabilities will be treated like a medical diagnosis or label.

IRIS is a program that gives many of our member's choices on how to live their lives. It is a good option for people who do not need managed-care. It should remain a separate choice.

Our members hope the plan the committee approves will make sure we start at the beginning, to make decisions that are right for people with disabilities. We hope to have a place at the table.