



Survival Coalition

of Wisconsin Disability Organizations

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The Survival Coalition of more than 30 disability organizations is hearing from many distraught long-term care participants, their families, and businesses connected to long-term care regarding yesterday's Joint Finance budget decision that changes Wisconsin's Family Care/IRIS programs.

The Joint Finance motion, which replaces the proposed changes in the biennial budget, does not maintain IRIS as a separate Medicaid program, although participants will be able to manage their budgets and hire their own workers with oversight from managed care. It reduces and changes the number of managed care regions from 8 to as few as 5.

"This plan creates a pathway for for-profit insurance companies with no limits on profits or administrative costs," said Kit Kerschensteiner, Survival Coalition co-chair. "It also is silent on whether service levels or types will remain unchanged."

Co-chair Beth Swedeen said Survival will soon have analysis of the budget motion that will analyze impacts of the changes and compare it to the Governor's proposed budget changes.

"One thing we are hearing loud and clear today is that the thousands of long-term care stakeholders who participate or provide services in the existing programs do not feel that their input is reflected in this motion," Swedeen said. "We have had record participation from the disability and aging communities at public hearings, town halls, and at the Capitol. No one today is saying that this motion is what they were asking for."

Co-chair Maureen Ryan said meaningful stakeholder input in the weeks and months ahead will be critical to the disability community.

"People who currently use these programs, their families, the small businesses who provide services, and county leadership all need to be at the table to ask important questions and offer potential solutions about the real cost drivers in long-term care, how to create sustainability, and how to measure and achieve outcomes that assure people with disabilities are living safely and in good health in their communities. That's what quality long-term care is all about."

Survival Coalition Issue Teams: education, employment, housing, long term care for adults, long term care for children, mental health, transportation, workforce, voting, Medicaid and health care.
