



May 7, 2021

Governor Tony Evers  
State Capitol, Room 115 East  
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Governor Evers,

Representing long-term care providers across the state, and many diverse settings, we are grateful for the support you and your Administration have provided to our members during the COVID pandemic. We, like you, remain very concerned about stability for the future. As you know, collectively, our members have been devastated by COVID, emotionally, physically, and financially. We ask you to utilize American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to stabilize the long-term care safety net in Wisconsin and invest in those who provide access to care for our most vulnerable. We request \$445,586,398 for Wisconsin Caregiver Workforce and COVID Modernization costs incurred unexpectedly by our members. Our request is broken down into three segments, which are explained below.

Workforce needs are more critical than ever. Throughout the pandemic, our caregivers have stepped up to the plate to provide care. Providers have done everything possible to reward our health care heroes, but we are still unable to provide the level of compensation needed to retain and recruit direct care workers. The Direct Care Workforce (DCW) fund has been an invaluable tool to assist us; however, as your Task Force on Caregiving recommended, further investments are needed to ensure long-term care is seen as a desirable career path. Building on your proposed increase to the DCW fund and Skilled Nursing Facilities in the 2021-23 biennial budget, we ask you to utilize ARPA funds to create a bridge and stabilization workforce payment of \$57,379,450 for January – June 2021.

Before COVID, our Long-Term Care Workforce 2020 Report cited a 23.5% average caregiver vacancy rate. To thank our workforce for their outstanding efforts during COVID and to enhance providers' workforce retention efforts, we request \$222,565,428 for those working in our settings, and funding to help offset the remaining gaps in our caregiver workforce.

Adapting to COVID has also meant new costs to providers. This has included personal protective equipment (PPE), updates to HVAC systems, creation of new private settings, new technology for continuity of services, infrared thermometers, transportation costs, etc. We ask for \$165,641,520 to assist our members with these new, unexpected COVID modernization costs.

As you will see in our attachment, we have provided a full set of data to demonstrate existing needs and support for our request. Ultimately, we are seeking relief for less than the true impact on our long-term care provider members; only 14% of ARPA funds awarded to Wisconsin.

We know you value the work of all caregivers in Wisconsin and ask you to utilize your role to recognize them at this critical time. Please invest \$445,586,398 of ARPA funding toward long-term care Providers to ensure stability, access, and quality care and services now and into the future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



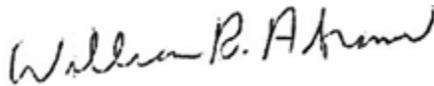
Lisa M. Davidson  
CEO, DSPN



John Sauer  
President/CEO, LeadingAge Wisconsin



Mike Pochowski  
CEO, WALA



Rick Abrams  
President & CEO, WHCA/WiCAL

CC:

Lisa Olson, Assistant Deputy Secretary  
Jenni Dye, Office of Governor Tony Evers

**Caregiver Workforce Sustainability**

---

**Bridge Funding**

|                             |                      |  |                      |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|--|----------------------|
| SNF bridge increase         | 37,191,000.00        | Cost to fund proposed 11.5% increase from 1/1/21-6/30/21 |                      |
| FC bridge increase          | 20,188,450.00        | Cost to fund proposed DCWF increase from 1/1/21-6/30/21  |                      |
| Subtotal for bridge funding | <u>57,379,450.00</u> | 100% of Bridge Funding Increase                          | <u>57,379,450.00</u> |

---

**Recovery**

---

**Workforce/Staffing**

|                                 |                       |  |                       |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Recruitment/sign on bonus       | 20,655,000.00         | \$1,000 sign on bonus for all open positions             |                       |
| Hero/Retention Pay              | 721,229,760.00        | Estimated equivalent of a \$2/hour increase for one year |                       |
| Subtotal for Workforce/Staffing | <u>741,884,760.00</u> | 30% of Workforce/Staffing Need                           | <u>222,565,428.00</u> |

**COVID Modernization**

|   |                                  |  |                       |
|---|----------------------------------|--|-----------------------|
|   | Residential Setting Per bed cost |  |                       |
| COVID Unit conversion                   | 3,000.00                         | Cost to stand up a COVID bed                   |                       |
| COVID modernization                     | 1,800.00                         | Costs for HVAC segregation and ionization      |                       |
| Private room conversion                 | 1,000.00                         | Stipend of \$1000/bed to put toward conversion |                       |
| per bed total                           | <u>5,800.00</u>                  |  |                       |
| Beds (SNF)                              | 28,800.00                        |  |                       |
| Beds (AL)                               | 65,248.00                        |  |                       |
| Residential Setting COVID modernization | <u>545,478,400.00</u>            |  |                       |
| Non-Residential COVID Modernization     | <u>6,660,000.00</u>              | \$15,000/setting                               |                       |
| Subtotal for COVID Modernization        | <u>552,138,400.00</u>            | 30% of COVID Modernization Need                | <u>165,641,520.00</u> |

|   |                                |                      |                              |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Total Sustainability/Recovery Need</b> | <u><u>1,344,742,610.00</u></u> | <b>Total Request</b> | <u><u>445,586,398.00</u></u> |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|