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September 9, 2025

Re: League of Women Voters of WI Opposition to AB308/SB311

The League of Women Voters of WI strongly opposes AB308/SB311 based on our strong positions of a humane healthcare system that protects all Wisconsinites, programs that enhance the economic base and quality of life for residents, and more. The issues with this legislation are as follows:

1. Undermines Public Health and Economic Rationale

Denying access to preventative and primary healthcare for anyone—regardless of immigration status—drives up long-term costs. Treatable conditions worsen and end up in emergency rooms, raising insurance premiums and burdening taxpayers.

Undocumented Wisconsinites contribute significantly to our state's economy—through labor, taxes, and community participation. Excluding them from basic health services is short-sighted and counterproductive.

2. Conflicts with Wisconsin's Public Health Obligations

Infectious diseases do not respect legal status. Excluding certain people from healthcare weakens our disease surveillance and control—including for flu, TB, and COVID-19—placing all Wisconsinites at risk.

Healthier communities benefit everyone. Ensuring access to healthcare for all residents lowers overall public costs and improves social outcomes.

3. Potential Legal and Federal Funding Consequences

Federal Medicaid and CHIP programs, along with public health grants, often allow emergency or limited care irrespective of immigration status. AB 308 may jeopardize federal healthcare reimbursements and grant eligibility.

Denying care could be challenged under federal EMTALA standards, which require hospitals to treat individuals in emergencies regardless of status. This bill risks placing Wisconsin in legal contention.

4. Ethical Concerns and Wisconsin Values

Wisconsin has a long tradition of compassion and equity. AB 308 erects punitive barriers and conflicts with our values of inclusion, fairness, and responsible governance.