



November 14, 2017

Legislation: Caregiver Tax Credit: AB 631, Rep. Skowronski

Position: SUPPORT

Dear Members of the Assembly Committee on Mental Health,

Please accept this letter of support for AB 631 on behalf of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. This establishes a tax credit equal to 50% of the amount incurred by a family caregiver up to \$1,000. The credit can be used to offset costs related to accessible home modifications; purchase or lease of equipment; and goods, services, or supports to assist in providing care, including hiring a home care aide, respite care, transportation, legal and financial services and assistive technology. The National Multiple Sclerosis Society strongly supports this legislation.

Multiple sclerosis is an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system which interrupts the flow of information within the brain, and between the brain and body. Symptoms range from numbness and tingling to blindness and paralysis. People living with multiple sclerosis often need caregiver support, as more than half of people living with MS require some form of assistance with daily activities. Eighty percent of this care is provided by an informal caregiver – usually family caregivers. On average, a family caregiver spends 24 hours each week providing care to his/her family member with MS so that they can remain at home. Families may struggle financially due to the cost of caring for a person disabled by MS. Many family members have reduced work hours, or are unable to hold down a job. Due to symptoms of living with MS and the progression of the disease, people with MS may find that their daily lives, ability to remain independent, and their quality of life would be improved with assistive technology, modifications to their home, and other goods, services, and supports to assist with caregiving.

People with MS and their caregivers need more support. Providing a tax credit to provide financial support for home modifications, equipment, and specialized services will enable family caregivers to more easily ensure the safety and well-being of their loved ones living with a chronic illness or disability, and provide them with some relief. The National Multiple Sclerosis Society asks that you support AB 631.

Respectfully,

Anne Brouwer
Chair of the National MS Society's Wisconsin Government Relations Advisory Committee
W21357335 Annes Way
Muskego, WI 53150
312-953-9124
abrouwer@wi.rr.com

Jessalyn Hampton
Sr. Manager, Advocacy
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
303-698-5431
Jessalyn.hampton@nmss.org



November 14, 2017

CC:

Representative Tittl, Chair of the Assembly Committee on Mental Health

Representative Jagler, Vice Chair of the Assembly Committee on Mental Health

Representative Ballweg

Representative Novak

Representative Sanfelippo

Representative Snyder

Representative VanderMeer

Representative Spiros

Representative Considine

Representative Sargent

Representative Brostoff

Representative Zepnick

Representative Skowronski

Assembly Speaker Vos

Majority Leader Steineke

Minority Leader Hintz