



January 6, 2021

The Honorable Robin Vos
Wisconsin State Assembly Speaker
Room 217 West, State Capitol
Electronically Delivered

The Honorable Deven LeMahieu
Wisconsin State Senate Majority Leader
Room 211 South, State Capitol
Electronically Delivered

Dear Speaker Vos and Majority Leader LeMahieu:

Since the beginning of the pandemic, long-term care (LTC) providers throughout Wisconsin have taken critically important steps in combatting and controlling the spread of the coronavirus. Our state's nursing home and assisted living facility providers have continued to put in place all the necessary precautions to protect their residents and staff in the face of an already acute workforce shortage and insufficient reimbursement rates.

Over the next few weeks and months, our health care system needs will shift. As more wide-spread vaccinations allow our communities to begin to open back up, our state's LTC providers will continue to fulfill their critical mission of protecting and safeguarding the health of their elderly residents entrusted to their care.

We appreciate past efforts by the Legislature and the Governor to address COVID-19 in our state and are pleased to support renewed efforts through bi-partisan discussion and legislation that continues to address the COVID-19 crisis in Wisconsin. To that end:

LeadingAge Wisconsin strongly supports the civil liability exemption as outlined in Sec. 59 of Assembly Bill 1 (AB 1). This section provides the necessary protection for long-term care providers who strive every day to provide the best possible care to their patients and residents. These providers are committed to providing the utmost safety and protection of their residents and the staff who care for them, and LeadingAge Wisconsin supports civil liability protections for those providers and health care workers who are under continued scrutiny in these most challenging of times.

LeadingAge Wisconsin seeks an exemption for long-term care providers in Sec. 15 of AB 1 which prohibits mandatory vaccination for employment. LTC providers are in agreement that widespread vaccination of staff and residents is critical to combatting the spread of COVID-19. However, we believe that the long-term care setting and nature of care provided in that setting may warrant requiring employee vaccination as a condition of employment, and we ask that you consider allowing LTC providers to make that determination in the best interest of the safety and welfare of their patients and residents.

On behalf of LTC providers throughout the state, we thank you for prioritizing the fight against COVID-19 at the start of this new legislative session. We appreciate the opportunity to share our support and input on various provisions within Assembly Bill 1. Please feel free to contact LeadingAge Wisconsin if you have questions or would like any further information.

Sincerely,

John Sauer
President/CEO
LeadingAge Wisconsin