

GWAAR Board Advocacy Update 2-07-25

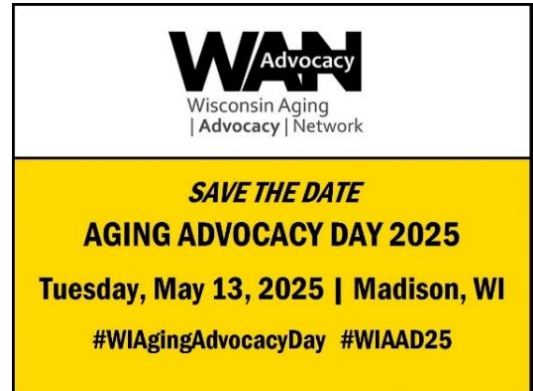
State

Aging Advocacy Day 2025 – Save the Date

Registration opens Mon., March 10, 2025.

Advocacy priorities include Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Investment, Direct Care Workforce Supports, Home-Delivered Meal Funding, and Healthy Aging Grants – Falls Prevention.

Find Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) issue briefs here <https://gwaar.org/waan-issues-and-initiatives>.



State Legislation/Policy Ideas

WAAN is pursuing:



- **Legislation to modernize Wisconsin’s Alzheimer’s Family and Caregiver Support Program (AFCSP).** Read the issue brief [here](#).
- **Modifications to state law to protect volunteer drivers** from personal auto insurance premium increases or coverage denials solely due to their volunteer driver status. Read the issue brief [here](#).

WAAN is also currently collaborating with advocates on legislation to:

- **Create a state Parkinson’s Disease Registry.** For more information see the [Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research](#).
- **Expand online Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) information to include an option to provide caregiver/caretaker information to the electronic record** of anyone applying for a driver’s license, learner’s permit, or state ID. During the last state legislative session, a law passed giving Wisconsin residents the option to add one emergency contact to their record. To date, almost 60,000 applicants have provided emergency contact information that is part of their Wisconsin electronic driver’s license record. See the caretaker section of the [Sec. 171.12 Minnesota State Statutes](#).

State Budget 2025-2027

Governor Evers will deliver his budget address on Tues., Feb. 18, 2025, at 7 p.m. - [Watch Live on WisconsinEye](#).

Federal

Protect Medicaid

Aging and disability constituents and other advocates throughout the state and across the country have been contacting Members of Congress to talk about what Medicaid cuts would mean for them, their families, and the workers paid to provide their care. **Those calls are making an impact.** Congress knows older adults, people living with disabilities and those who care for and about them are watching.



Medicaid insures more than 70 million people in America. **Calls from constituents are making lawmakers question how Medicaid cuts will impact the areas they represent.** Congress is currently deciding which Medicaid cuts they want to put in or leave out of a bill. **Your calls can help them decide NOT to put Medicaid cuts in the bill.**

Congress is considering **over \$2 trillion cuts in federal Medicaid spending** which would dramatically reduce the amount of money sent to states. Cuts of this size will impact Wisconsin's state budget, the **1.2 million Wisconsinites who get health and long-term care coverage through [programs funded by Medicaid](#)**, and the businesses and providers whose salaries and costs are paid for by Medicaid dollars.

- See a summary of proposed Medicaid cuts: <https://bit.ly/40NywIw>
- View a detailed list of proposed cuts: <https://bit.ly/40ZPaj8>

Congress may use the budget reconciliation process to fast-track federal Medicaid cuts (this process only requires a simple majority to pass the Senate to become law). It is unclear whether there will be two separate reconciliation bills or one large bill. Medicaid cuts could also be included in debt ceiling and FY 2025 appropriation bills (that require 60 votes in the Senate). **To prevent Medicaid cuts, we need to engage our federal lawmakers before and during each of these steps.**

Action Steps you can take today:

- Make three phone calls to your three Federal legislators, all of whom will be making decisions about cuts to Federal Medicaid spending.
 - Contact Wisconsin's two U.S. Senators, Sen. Tammy Baldwin (202) 224-5653 and Sen. Ron Johnson (202) 224-5323, and
 - Your U.S. Representative (use your ZIP code to [Look up your U.S. Representative](#)).

Federal lawmakers need to know how Medicaid helps you, your family, or someone you care about and what it would mean if services and supports were reduced or stopped. **Urge your legislators to reject any proposals that reduce federal Medicaid funding.** For **contact information** for Wisconsin's Members of Congress see [119th Congress: Wisconsin Congressional Delegation](#).



Older Americans Act (OAA) – Appropriations & Reauthorization

Congress Failed to Include Older Americans Act Reauthorization in the Stop Gap Funding Bill

Near the end of 2024, Congress passed and President Biden signed into law [H.R. 10545 - American Relief Act](#) to prevent a shutdown of the federal government. This short-term funding bill extends FY 2024 appropriation levels through March 14, 2025. The continuing resolution (CR) provided authorization and funding at federal FY 2024 levels for the Older Americans Act programs and the Medicare Improvements and for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA).

The reauthorization of the Older Americans Act (OAA) was not included in the CR. As the OAA reauthorization also included the RAISE Family Caregiver updates, these were also not included in the CR.

Final negotiations on the OAA bill were pushed off to members of the new Congress. Relationships with new and returning Members of Congress and their staffers must be formed to ensure older adults are protected and prioritized. Though we had bipartisan support for OAA reauthorization, OAA and other aging services funding is at risk as Members of Congress are discussing funding cuts to include in a budget reconciliation bill to help fund other border and tax cut priorities. Continued advocacy will be needed to break through the noise. Stay tuned, as our national partners will be contacting us in the future to join their advocacy efforts.