



Dear DSAW Members and Friends,

This week and last, the Wisconsin State Legislature has been debating a budget repair bill that affects the way changes to Wisconsin's medical assistance programs (including Medicaid/BadgerCare, Family Care, and others) are debated and put into action. The Board of Directors and staff of the Down Syndrome Association of Wisconsin (DSAW) want the DSAW community to be aware of these changes. Information on the changes is provided below.

If these changes affect you or your family, you may wish to contact your state legislators and Governor Walker. To find your legislators, click here: <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/w3asp/waml/waml.aspx>

Governor Walker can be contacted by phone at 608-266-1212 or by email at [govgeneral@wisconsin.gov](mailto:govgeneral@wisconsin.gov).

Here are several sources that describe the changes in the budget repair bill:

*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: "Walker Could Reshape Medical Care"  
(<http://www.jsonline.com/news/statepolitics/116164054.html>)

WISC Madison: "Walker's Bill Could Mean Big Changes for Medicaid"  
(<http://www.channel3000.com/politics/26935390/detail.html>)

*Wisconsin State Journal*: "Budget Proposal Would Impact How Health Care Works In State"  
([http://host.madison.com/wsj/news/local/govt-and-politics/article\\_a28507fa-38a7-11e0-a87e-001cc4c002e0.html](http://host.madison.com/wsj/news/local/govt-and-politics/article_a28507fa-38a7-11e0-a87e-001cc4c002e0.html))

The nonpartisan Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau has also released the following summary of the changes:

The provision could potentially give broad authority to the Department of Health Services, with approval of the Joint Committee on Finance, to significantly modify the medical assistance program and supersede most statutory provisions regarding the program. While the provision may result in significant savings in the future, it has been included on the list because it would remove the entire Legislature from determining substantial elements of the medical assistance program.

In addition, Governor Walker will be introducing a second budget bill for the 2011 – 2013 years in the near future, likely March 1. You may wish to contact your legislator very soon if services such as Katie Beckett, Family Care, IRIS benefits and other long-term supports are important to you or your family. To find your legislators, click here: <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/w3asp/waml/waml.aspx>.

Finally, DSAW is looking for parents and self-advocates to serve on the Advocacy Committee to formalize DSAW efforts to make Wisconsin a better place for individuals with Down syndrome. If you are interested in serving in this role, or if you want more information about the issues in this bulletin, please feel free to contact Mike Bare, DSAW Board Member and DSAW Advocacy Committee Chair, [mike@mbare.org](mailto:mike@mbare.org) or call DSAW, (414) 327-3729.

Best wishes, and thank you for all you do for our community,

*The DSAW Board of Directors, Executive Director and Staff*