



**For Immediate Release
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Committee Deserves Praise for Preservation of Medical Assistance *Joint Committee Action Saves Health Care for Children and Families Statewide*

Madison – Today the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families (WCCF) praised the action taken by Joint Finance yesterday in preserving eligibility for low income families for Medical Assistance and BadgerCare .

“One of the biggest challenges of this budget has been Medical Assistance,” said Charity Eleson, executive director for WCCF. “The Joint Committee on Finance kept Wisconsin’s commitment to ensuring health care coverage for the state’s low-income working families, children and vulnerable adults.”

Even as late as the beginning of the week rumors persisted of significant programmatic cuts, decreases in eligibility, as well as significant increases in co-pays. However, the final omnibus motion passed unanimously by the committee late Wednesday included only one setback for Medicaid and BadgerCare recipients, an increase in generic drug co-pays by 200 percent, from \$1 to \$3.

Highlights of the MA omnibus bill for children and their families:

- Preservation of BadgerCare
- No decreases in eligibility in any Medical Assistance program
- Co-pays only increased for generic drugs
- Prenatal care for pregnant women in prisons and immigrants

“Prenatal care for pregnant immigrants and women in prisons is sound fiscal policy. Not only do we save state money and capture more federal dollars, we are making wise and compassionate decisions for the health of women and children in our state,” said Jon Peacock, WCCF research director.

“The challenges to funding Medical Assistance have been significant in the last two budgets and will continue to be a challenge,” Eleson said. “However, we are extremely pleased that both the Finance Committee and the Governor have made protection of health care programs a high priority.”

The Wisconsin Council on Children and Families is a non-profit, nonpartisan, statewide research and advocacy group.