



# Wisconsin Values

**For Immediate Release**  
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## **Wisconsin Values Bring Together People from Across State**

*Real People Speak Out About the Wisconsin State Budget\**

**Madison** – Calling on the state legislature to craft a biennial budget that reflects the value Wisconsinites place in strong communities, a clean environment, good schools and caring for vulnerable populations, 24 diverse organizations joined together today to feature the stories of individuals from communities around the state who will be affected by decisions made thus far in the 2005-2007 biennial budget bill. Personal caregivers, parents, low-income workers, students and health care workers stood up to explain how the decisions made in the Capitol will affect their lives and the lives of those they care for back in their communities.

“As we collectively honor these values inherent to Wisconsin, we raise our united voice to those we have entrusted to not only lead us but to equally preserve these very same Wisconsin values. We ask our leaders to base their budget decisions on the values that have made Wisconsin great. We ask our leaders to consider the greatest assets that Wisconsin has to offer, our people,” said Craig Oliver, Racine, community and faith activist.

### **Wisconsin Values a Clean Environment**

“Like most Wisconsinites, I want the natural beauty of our state preserved so that my children and grandchildren can enjoy it the way I have. I value the lakes and rivers in Wisconsin, the northern forests and the opportunity to experience those special places. This budget does not reflect those values,” said Glen Jenkins, a retired principal and father from La Crosse. *The biennial budget reduces the tipping fees, making it more attractive for out-of-state waste haulers to dump waste in Wisconsin, reduces funding to prevent drinking water contamination and reduces funding for residential energy conservation measures.*

### **Wisconsin Values Access to Higher Education**

"The affordability of Wisconsin's higher education, especially the funding of financial aid for those who cannot afford our universities, is something that Wisconsin has prided itself on. However, this budget flies in the face of that notion. With another double-digit tuition increase and a cut in financial aid funding, our state leaders are pricing a UW education out of the hands of Wisconsin students and their families," said Joe Eggers from Appleton and student at UW River Falls. *The biennial budget does not provide an additional \$11 million in financial aid as proposed by Governor Doyle and it is likely to result in double-digit increases in tuition.*

## **Wisconsin Values Health Care for Vulnerable Populations**

"As a caregiver caring for people with disabilities, I worry about the impact this will have on the quality of their lives and independent living opportunities. For me as a caregiver it means my wages and standard of living will suffer, the cuts further limit my job opportunities and will discourage others from becoming caregivers," said Ullfrica Talley, a personal caregiver from Dane County. *The biennial budget reduces funding for Personal Care by \$16 million.*

"I am a BadgerCare recipient. Before BadgerCare I had to jump from job to job or not work in order to get benefits for myself and my children. BadgerCare has allowed me to be gainfully employed for the past three years with the same employer. BadgerCare supports work. It allows me to be a productive member of society. My son has had serious mental health issues which included three suicide attempts and subsequent hospitalizations. His medications were very expensive and without Medicaid he would not have had the care he needed," said Evelyn Saylor, Plover. *The biennial budget preserves important health care coverage for low-income families including BadgerCare and medical assistance.*

## **Wisconsin Values Strong Public Schools**

"Children are not statistics or test scores or recipients of 'per pupil' dollars. We have to think of the impact of our budget decisions as though each child affected was our child or grandchild – they depend on that. As I look at my own children, I have to worry if the resources will be there to prepare them for the future," said Wendy Cooper, parent and PTO member. *The biennial budget makes deep cuts in per pupil spending limits, eliminates increased funding for SAGE that was proposed by Governor Doyle and eliminates first year funding for school districts starting up 4-K and funding for school breakfast expansion.*

## **Wisconsin Values High Quality Early Care and Education and Access to that Care for Children Regardless of Income**

"We should not be forced to put limits on our children and I don't think it is fair just because I do not make as much as some or because I am a single mom that my child cannot have equal child care, by raising the co-pay this is exactly what it would do," said Lindsay McClernan, a full-time working mother and student. *The biennial budget increases co-payments that low-income working parents must pay for child care tuition assistance, substantially reduces funding for Child Care Resource and Referral Centers, and eliminates Governor Doyle's Quality Care for Quality Kids initiative and the increases in funding to improve the quality of child care.*

## **Wisconsin Values Healthy Transitions for Youth Aging out of Foster Care**

"I'm here today because I need health care and so do thousands of other former foster children like me who want to go on to continue their education. For them and for those who work and don't get health care with their jobs, rent, utilities and transportation costs use up all the money they have. There is nothing left for health care," said Darryl Sanders, a young adult who has aged out of Wisconsin's foster care system. *The biennial budget does not include funding for health care coverage for youth leaving the foster care system and without other health care supports.*

Other values groups represented expressed included:

- **Helping low-income families become economically secure.** The biennial budget does not provide sufficient funding for W-2 benefits, eliminates increases in transportation funding for low-income working adults, eliminates Governor Doyle's Trial Jobs Plus proposal, and substantially reduces funding for W-2 service delivery.
- **Safe children and nurturing communities.** The biennial budget imposes a property tax freeze which will affect, in particular, the ability of counties to maintain a strong system of human services to vulnerable populations, including abused and neglected children, seniors and people with disabilities.

*\*All individuals who spoke at the event are available for reporters to interview. Please contact Julie Laundrie at the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, 608-284-0580, ext. 303, for speakers' contact information.*

### **Groups Participating in the Wisconsin Values Event**

American Federation of Teachers (AFT)  
Benefits Advocacy Team of Dane County  
Children's Service Society of Wisconsin  
Hunger Task Force  
National Association of Social Workers NASW-WI Chapter  
New Hope Project  
St. Vincent DePaul Society – Milwaukee  
SEIU Local 150  
SEIU 1199 Wisconsin  
SEIU State Council  
State Independent Living Council  
United Council of UW Students  
WEAC  
Wisconsin Association of Family and Children's Agencies (WAFCA)  
Wisconsin Association of School Nurses  
Wisconsin Child Care and Education Coalition  
Wisconsin Citizen Action  
Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
Wisconsin Community Action Program Association  
Wisconsin Council on Children and Families  
Wisconsin Council of Churches  
Wisconsin Democracy Campaign  
Wisconsin Early Childhood Association (WECA)  
Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters