

A 2017 STATE BUDGET SUMMARY FOR SELF-ADVOCATES

Governor Walker introduced his state budget on February 8. The budget tells us which programs will receive money and how much money each program will get. It also tells us if new programs are created or if they are going away.

It is important for people with disabilities to know what things in the state budget will affect them so they can advocate.

Here are some things in the budget that will affect people with disabilities:

TRANSPORTATION

►NEEDS WORK



There was a small increase in money (\$840,000) for specialized transportation for people with disabilities and older adults. There was no increase for public transit, like buses.

What you can say: Transportation is the number one concern for people with disabilities in Wisconsin. People with disabilities need to get around in their communities, get to work and see family and friends. Please increase funding for transportation options.

CARE IN THE COMMUNITY

►GOOD



There are no big changes to Family Care, IRIS or other long-term care programs. The money for these programs remains the same.

What you can say: Thank you for continuing to fund Family Care and IRIS. People with disabilities need these programs to keep them healthy and living and working in their communities.

►NEEDS WORK

There is more money in the budget (\$15 million) for personal care supports to help people with things like getting a bath, getting dressed and helping with their meals in their homes. However, nursing homes will receive three times more money than care in the community.

What you can say: People with disabilities want to live in their own homes and communities, not in institutions or nursing homes. More money should be spent to support people in their homes because it costs less. Please increase funding for workers in the community who need better wages.

EMPLOYMENT

►GOOD



Many people with disabilities use the Medical Assistance Purchase Plan (MAPP) work incentives program that helps them keep their Medicaid while they work. Some changes will mean all people will pay at least a \$25 premium and others will see their premiums lower as they work and earn more.

What you can say: The MAPP program is important so people with disabilities can work and keep their Medicaid healthcare. Healthcare must be affordable for people.

EMPLOYMENT

▶GOOD

The budget includes funding (\$7.6 million) for two new programs that will help young people with disabilities get jobs while they are still in school; the Transition Incentives Grant and the Transition Readiness Investment Grant.

What you can say: Thank you and please keep this important funding in the budget. Having one job while in high school means a youth with a disability is twice as likely to have a job as an adult. Schools need money to help pay for the time it takes to find jobs for kids, for transportation to work and other job coaching.

EDUCATION

▶NEEDS WORK

The budget does not add any new money for special education.



What you can say: Wisconsin schools have not had an increase for special education in almost ten years. Please increase funding so students with disabilities can have the supports they need to succeed in the classroom alongside students without disabilities.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

▶GOOD

The Governor added \$39,000,000 to the budget to end the waiting list for children with disabilities. Many of these children and their families (2600 are waiting) have been waiting for many years for help.



What you can say: Thank you and please keep this important funding in the budget. Children with disabilities need supports to help them be healthy and to be part of their communities.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?

STEP 1

The Legislature decides how much money to give to programs for people with disabilities.

STEP 2

There will be public hearings around the state.

STEP 3

People with disabilities should attend these hearings and contact their own legislators to say what they like or don't like about the budget.

STEP 4

The Legislature will make changes to and vote on the budget.

STEP 5

The budget must be signed by the Governor.

People First Wisconsin



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Do you have more questions about the State Budget?

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