



For Immediate Release
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The Arc Supports New Employment First Bill for People with Disabilities

Madison, WI – The Arc Wisconsin celebrates The Employment First bill - LRB-0753 - introduced for co-sponsorship today by Representative James Edming, Representative Jimmy Anderson and Senator Tom Tiffany that will be the first of its kind in the nation to promote employment of people with disabilities.

“This bill is notable in how it will require state agencies to collaborate, share data and streamline policies and funding,” says Lisa Pugh, Executive Director of The Arc Wisconsin. “Bureaucracy should not get in the way of people’s desire to work and this bill ensures it won’t.”

The bill was shared today with significant support across a variety of stakeholders including employment services providers. Early bill supporters include: Special Olympics Wisconsin, Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin, Bethesda Lutheran Communities, Easterseals of Southeast Wisconsin, Wisconsin Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition, Survival Coalition of Wisconsin Disability Organizations, Headwaters, Inc., Black River Industries and Rehabilitation for Wisconsin in Action.

“We would like to thank the bill’s authors for working across the aisle and with state agencies to secure support for this important bill,” says Pugh. “While other states have passed employment policies that require discussion of barriers to work for people with disabilities, this is the first such state legislation that requires collaboration across state agencies with benchmarks and goal-setting.”

The Arc Wisconsin urges all legislators to support this bill and to ensure its passage.

The Arc Wisconsin advocates for and serves people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD), including Down syndrome, autism, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, cerebral palsy and other diagnoses. The Arc Wisconsin has 15 local chapters and is connected to a network of more than 650 chapters across the country promoting and protecting the human rights of people with I/DD and actively supporting their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes and without regard to diagnosis.

Editor’s Note: The Arc is not an acronym; always refer to us as The Arc, not The ARC and never ARC. The Arc should be considered as a title or a phrase.