



For Immediate Release

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Rep. Hintz Statement on Withdrawal of Changes to FamilyCare and IRIS

MADISON- Today, Department of Health Services Secretary Kitty Rhoades announced that the DHS has withdrawn a concept paper that would have required the dismantling of Wisconsin's long term care system, also known as FamilyCare and IRIS. Rep. Gordon Hintz (D-Oshkosh), a member of the Joint Committee on Finance, released the following statement:

"From the first day the proposal to dismantle Wisconsin's long term care system was introduced, it was apparent that this plan would significantly disrupt the lives of the nearly 60,000 frail elderly and people with disabilities, provide little or no cost savings, and was a massive sellout to out-of-state for-profit insurance companies.

"It is very unfortunate that the community served by FamilyCare and IRIS was put through so much stress and uncertainty during this year-long process. However, I remain so impressed with these individuals' tenacity and all of the excellent work they put into demonstrating how these programs lower care costs while providing them with the support services they need to be successful.

"While we have yet to find out why this proposal was put forward and who requested it, I hope that Secretary Rhoades, the Governor, and Legislative Republicans recognize the value of Wisconsin's long term care system and the importance of informing and involving its stakeholders when pursuing any changes. Our state has an obligation to ensure our frail elderly and those with disabilities have the right to participate in their communities, and they are more willing than anyone else to make sure that goal is achieved in an efficient and cost effective manner."

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