



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

August 17, 2011

Dennis Smith, Secretary
Wisconsin Department of Health Services
1 West Wilson Street, Room 650
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Secretary Smith:

We write to express our deep disappointment in your decision to not pursue or support several federal health grants this year that would have helped fight drug and alcohol abuse and expanded health care access in Wisconsin. We strongly urge you to apply for or support similar federal prevention and health care access grants in the future, as the application deadlines for the grants mentioned below have already passed.

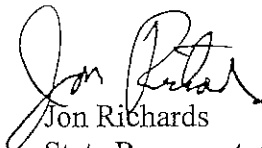
Wisconsin has earned the dubious distinction of having the highest rates of drunken driving and binge drinking in the nation. Nevertheless, you still decided not to apply for two federal health grants totaling \$8.6 million over the next five years to fight substance abuse in Wisconsin, according to a recent report by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. One of these grants, the Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) grant, would have helped expand delivery of substance abuse intervention services in primary care and other health care settings in Wisconsin. This grant would have continued the state's original five-year grant. That grant laid the groundwork for the state's ongoing alcohol and drug screening, intervention and treatment referral services. The other grant, the Strategic Prevention Framework State Prevention Enhancement Grant, would have enhanced Wisconsin's substance abuse prevention infrastructure, improving state prevention service systems and identifying gaps in service.


In addition to asking you to support programs that help prevent and expand treatment for substance abuse, we encourage you to do everything in your power to make health care accessible and affordable for all Wisconsin residents. We were disappointed by your decision in April to decline to support an application by ABC for Health to renew its federal grant for enrolling eligible people for BadgerCare Plus, according to the same news report mentioned above. Your decision to not support the important and necessary work of a nonprofit public interest advocate like ABC for Health appears to be unprecedented. Similar requests for federal health funding have consistently been supported in the past by Republican and Democratic administrations alike.

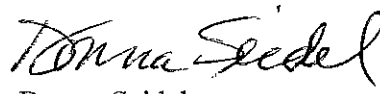
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Again, we are troubled by your decision to not pursue or support federal health grants that would have funded services dedicated to addressing Wisconsin's substance abuse problems and expanding access to affordable health care. We strongly urge you to aggressively pursue federal health funding for Wisconsin in the future.

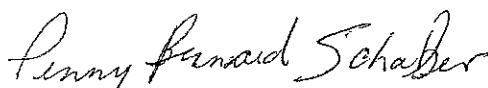
Sincerely,

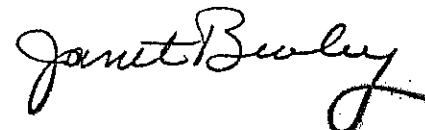

Jon Richards
State Representative
Assembly District 19



Sandy Pasch
State Representative
Assembly District 22



Donna Seidel
State Representative
Assembly District 85



Kelda Roys
State Representative
Assembly District 81



Penny Bernard-Schaber
State Representative
Assembly District 57

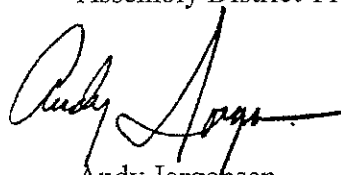

Janet Bewley
State Representative
Assembly District 74

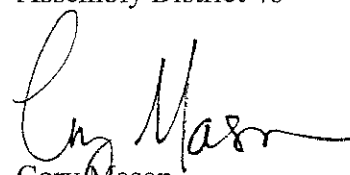

Fred Clark
State Representative
Assembly District 42


Jason Fields
State Representative
Assembly District 11



Gary Hebl
State Representative
Assembly District 46



Brett Hulsey
State Representative
Assembly District 77


Andy Jorgensen
State Representative
Assembly District 37


Cory Mason
State Representative
Assembly District 62


Nick Milroy
State Representative
Assembly District 73


Louis Molepske, Jr.
State Representative
Assembly District 71


Mark Pocar
State Representative
Assembly District 78



Sondy Pope-Roberts
State Representative
Assembly District 79



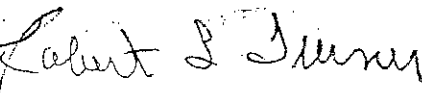
Jennifer Shilling
State Representative
Assembly District 95



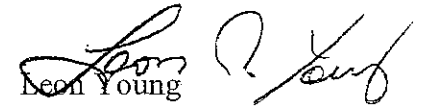
Christine Sinicki
State Representative
Assembly District 20



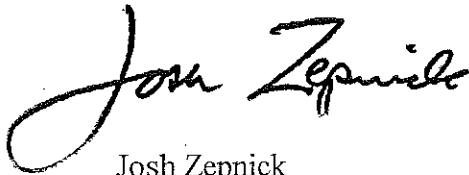
Barbara Toles
State Representative
Assembly District 17



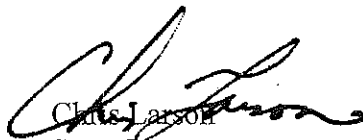
Robert Turner
State Representative
Assembly District 61



Leon Young
State Representative
Assembly District 16



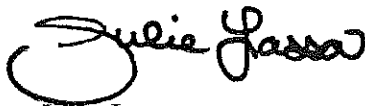
Josh Zepnick
State Representative
Assembly District 9



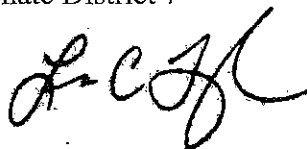
Chris Larson
State Senator
Senate District 7



Jon Erpenbach
State Senator
Senate District 27



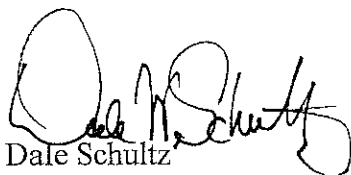
Julie Lassa
State Senator
Senate District 24



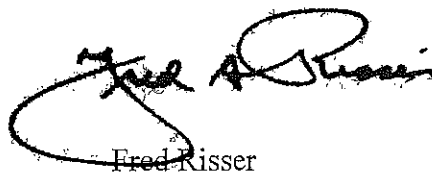
Lena Taylor
State Senator
Senate District 4



Kathleen Vinehout
State Senator
Senate District 31



Dale Schultz
State Senator
Senate District 17



Fred Risser
State Senator
Senate District 26



Gordon Hintz
State Representative
Assembly District 54



Janis Ringhand
State Representative
Assembly District 80