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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SEIU Wisconsin State Council applauds proposals to improve Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) staffing levels

SEIU is pleased to support three initiatives that would take concrete steps to address a shortage of health care workers critical to the ability of hospitals and nursing homes to deliver safe care. The three proposals introduced today (LRB 4745, LRB 4744, and LRB 4743) to increase pay for CNAs closer to a living wage, provide a tax credit for tuition, and to make sure technical colleges have enough positions to meet training needs.

The bills are part of a package introduced by Representatives Lisa Subeck and Jonathan Brostoff, along with Senator Latonya Johnson. Together they represent a new, better way of addressing worker shortages in their focus on training and compensation to encourage the strongest workforce available.

“As CNAs, we have to do very challenging work – which is not for everyone - to ensure that our most vulnerable residents have the care they need to live with the dignity they deserve. We are the first responders to hospital patients and nursing home residents, ensuring their safety and helping them to the best possible health outcomes,” said Virgie Burton, a CNA at Oakwood Village.

“Due to low pay and the cost of training, we face shortages of qualified CNAs. This is a smart way to address these issues so that WI residents get the best care possible,” added Burton.

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The SEIU WI State Council represents members of all SEIU local unions in the state, including healthcare and building service and maintenance workers. With 2,000,000 members SEIU is one of the largest unions in North America.