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Gov. Evers Signs Hospital-Supporting Legislation at WHA's Advocacy Day
Statewide hospital representatives gather to address health care challenges, opportunities

Madison, Wis., March 23, 2022—Following an address to nearly 1,000 attendees at the Wisconsin Hospital Association's (WHA's) annual Advocacy Day event, Gov. Tony Evers signed two important pieces of bipartisan legislation for Wisconsin hospitals and the patients they serve.

Assembly Bill 960 protects Wisconsin health care workers and their families from threats and acts of violence. Led by Speaker Robin Vos (R-Rochester) and Senate Majority Leader Devin LeMahieu (R-Oostburg), alongside Representative Gae Magnafici (R-Dresser) and Senator Van Wanggaard (R-Racine), the legislation passed both chambers of the Legislature on a voice vote earlier this month.

"Health care workers are better protected under this new law," said WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding. "WHA's members across the state express appreciation to Speaker Vos and Senate Majority Leader LeMahieu for authoring this important law and making passage of Assembly Bill 960 a priority at the end of session." Borgerding added, "WHA is also grateful to Governor Evers for signing Assembly Bill 960 into law today, showing health care workers that they are vital to our state and important to protect."

The second bill signed by Gov. Evers, Assembly Bill 679, permanently enables hospitals to deliver in-patient level care in a patient's home. The legislation was a continuation of current authority provided to hospitals that would expire without legislative action. The bill was led by Senator Dale Kooyenga (R-Brookfield) and Representative Amy Loudenbeck (R-Clinton).

The bill signings and accompanying remarks by the governor were part of a half-day program organized and hosted by WHA to draw attention to issues affecting health care providers as they strive to deliver high-quality, affordable care to communities throughout Wisconsin. Welcoming attendees to the event, Borgerding noted, "It's been two challenging years, and I know we are all anxious to put COVID in the rearview mirror. But we in health care can't do that just yet, because COVID has revealed strengths in our health care system that we must leverage, and weaknesses we cannot leave unaddressed. There are so many opportunities to emerge stronger and better, and that is what 1,000 hospital supporters are focused on today at WHA's Advocacy Day."

The event featured a keynote discussion between former U.S. Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb and WHA's Borgerding focused on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and strategies that can be employed now to strengthen the state's and the nation's public health preparedness. WHA's Advocacy Day also included a bipartisan legislative panel discussion hosted by WHA Senior Vice President of Government Relations Kyle O'Brien which included Sen. Joan Ballweg (R-Markeson), Sen. LaTonya Johnson (D-Milwaukee), Rep. Tony Kurtz (R-Wonewoc) and Rep. Evan Goyke (D-Milwaukee).

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Following the morning gathering, hospital representatives met virtually with their state senators and representatives. They thanked lawmakers for enacting public policies that help Wisconsin hospitals, providers, staff and their patients, including critical Medicaid funding, removing regulatory barriers for innovative care delivery model, and protecting health care workers from acts and threats of violence. Other key priorities highlighted included workforce challenges and hospitals' important role in serving their communities.

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ABOUT THE WISCONSIN HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
The Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) advocates on behalf of its 130-plus member hospitals and health systems to enable the delivery of high-quality, high-value care to the citizens of Wisconsin. Learn more at wha.org.