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Wisconsin Hospital Association Statement on State Budget

By WHA President & CEO Eric Borgerding

“Medicaid is the health care safety net for our most impoverished citizens and Wisconsin’s hospitals and health systems are proud to provide essential, and sometimes the only, access to care for this population. However, nearly one-third of Wisconsin hospitals operated in the red last year while Medicaid reimburses hospitals far below the costs they incur caring for these patients. These losses and unpaid costs make it difficult to expand access while adding nearly \$1.2 billion dollars annually to the cost of care for Wisconsin families and businesses.

That is why WHA applauds the actions of the Joint Committee on Finance, including approving substantial Medicaid reimbursement increases for hospitals and physicians. The Committee targeted nearly \$185 million in state and federal funding increases to areas of greatest need, including urban and rural safety net hospitals and behavioral health providers and services. We are also pleased with Committee’s action to expand access to care through telehealth and educate and train more physicians who will practice in Wisconsin through Graduate Medical Education, all top WHA priorities.

Access to high-quality, affordable health care is important for our state and the budget introduced by Governor Evers and now modified by the Joint Committee on Finance certainly has enough good health care policy in it to coalesce around and enact into law.”

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