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## **WHA Continues Push on Next-of-Kin Legislation**

### **WHCA/WiCAL & WALA join WHA in memo urging senate passage**

WHA is continuing its push to ensure Assembly Bill 598, the "Next-of-Kin" legislation, is passed before the Wisconsin State Legislature adjourns its regular business period on March 19. On March 10, WHA partnered with the Wisconsin Health Care Association/The Wisconsin Center for Assisted Living and the Wisconsin Assisted Living Association in urging Members of the Wisconsin State Senate to ensure the legislation passed before session adjourns next week.

As trade associations representing hospitals and long-term care facilities across Wisconsin, we write in support of AB 598, important "next-of-kin" legislation that we believe will make it easier for families and health care facilities prioritizing the appropriate care needs of their incapacitated loved ones," wrote the organizations in a joint memo.

The memo highlighted the cooperative efforts between the organizations to carefully craft legislation that takes into consideration the various concerns of member organizations and the patients they serve. For instance, it cited the time-limited nature of the current 50.06 statute that has been a major barrier for successful transitions to post-acute care due to the uncertainty it creates for nursing homes and community-based residential facilities. "As such, this uncertainty has rendered the current statute almost useless. This legislation seeks to resolve this by creating more certainty for post-acute care facilities that are otherwise willing to accept these patients."

The memo noted that Wisconsin's surrounding states and many others around the country have already expanded their next-of-kin statutes to resolve the issues Wisconsin is currently experiencing, with a recent American Bar Association (ABA) analysis concluding that a growing number of states have been using them to deal with the challenges of an aging population. "As an aging America prepares for the future, default surrogate statutes can act as a useful safety net for adults without previously appointed healthcare decision-makers," the ABA synopsis stated.

In addition to the memo, WHA is also continuing to meet with state senators and is encouraging its membership to keep up their contacts with their local state senators, including the reminder of its grassroots supporters to respond to WHA's HEAT alert mentioned in last week's *The Valued Voice* article.

Contact WHA Vice President of Federal Affairs and Advocacy Jon Hoelter with questions.

## **IN THIS ISSUE**

- WHA Discusses Hospital Price Transparency on Spectrum News Milwaukee
- WHA Continues Push on Next-of-Kin Legislation
- President's Column: "Wisconsin Blew Them Away"
- Hospital Expenses, Including Costs for Labor, Drugs and Supplies, Grew Twice as Fast as Hospital Prices in 2025
- Have You Read WHA's Annual Workforce Report Yet? – Register Today for the 2026 Wisconsin Health Care Workforce Webinar Series – Part 1
- Executive Project Sponsorship - WHA Health Care Leadership Academy Cohort Participates in Session

## **EDUCATION EVENTS**

**Mar. 13, 2026**

2026 Physician Leadership Development Conference

**Mar. 16, 2026**

Wisconsin Rural Health and Substance Use Clinical Support (RHeSUS) Program Offerings

**Mar. 17, 2026**

When Ultrasound Becomes Predictive: Predicting Preterm Birth with AI: Turning Routine Ultrasound into Actionable Insight