



**ADVOCATE. ADVANCE. LEAD.**

5510 Research Park Drive  
P.O. Box 259038  
Madison, WI 53725-9038  
608.274.1820 | FAX 608.274.8554 | [www.wha.org](http://www.wha.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Kelly Lietz  
[klietz@wha.org](mailto:klietz@wha.org) | 608.268.1845

## **Rep. Tony Kurtz Receives 2021 Health Care Advocate of the Year Award** **Kurtz recognized for supporting policies that enable delivery of high-quality, high-value health care**

**Madison, Wis., April 14, 2021**—The Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) has recognized State Representative Tony Kurtz (R-Wonewoc) with the Association’s 2021 Health Care Advocate of the Year Award.

Kurtz was honored at WHA’s virtual Advocacy Day event on April 14 for his partnership with local hospital leaders and his support of legislation to provide necessary Medicaid funding for hospitals, remove unnecessary regulations and bolster the state’s health care workforce.

Hospital leaders from the 50<sup>th</sup> Assembly District joined WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding to present the award to Representative Kurtz. Constituent presenters included Mile Bluff Medical Center President and CEO Jim O’Keefe, The Richland Hospital CEO Bruce Roesler and Reedsburg Area Medical Center President and CEO Bob Van Meeteren.

“It is our honor today to present WHA’s Health Care Advocate of the Year Award to an ally, a true champion for our community, and an important advocate for hospitals in Wisconsin: Representative Tony Kurtz,” said O’Keefe. “Representative Kurtz has a style that makes him an effective and influential lawmaker for hospitals. He reaches out, he listens, and then he acts.”

“One of the ways [Rep. Kurtz] has turned words into action is through supporting critical funding increases to hospitals like ours,” said Roesler. “As a hospital leader, the biggest issue we face is how to make sure our operations can remain funded and provide high quality access to care for patients in our communities. We, like Jim, thank him for reaching out to us on a regular basis and taking action in Madison to help us serve our community.”

“When the community had no one else to turn to during the pandemic, when public health needed help, they all turned to us,” said Van Meeteren. “We are privileged to serve in this role, but it has been extremely challenging on human and financial resources while illuminating the importance of our state’s hospitals. Tony understands and appreciates the work done by our state’s hospitals throughout the pandemic. He has been a helpful partner, cutting through the political noise to communicate critical messages to his constituents that helped us care for patients and keep people safe.

Receiving the Health Care Advocate of the Year Award, Kurtz noted that he was “humbled” by the honor. “I am extremely honored to receive this distinguished award,” he said. “But it was all of you that have really done the heavy lifting. I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. You have endured so much this past year, and you have exceeded all expectations. You stopped everything and focused on treating and slowing the spread of COVID-19. In my humble opinion, your proactive leadership slowed the spread and gave our state time to prepare. And prepare we did.”

**-MORE-**

WHA's Advocacy Day is the premier health care advocacy event in Wisconsin with approximately 1,000 virtual attendees representing nearly every hospital and health system in Wisconsin.

To view a video of WHA's Rep. Kurtz accepting the 2021 Advocate of the Year Award, click [here](#).

To download a photo of WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding presenting Rep. Kurtz with the 2021 Advocate of the Year award, click [here](#).

###

### 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](http://wha.org).



Wisconsin Hospital Association President and CEO Eric Borgerding presents State Representative Tony Kurtz (R-Wonewoc) with WHA's Health Care Advocate of the Year Award in the Wisconsin State Capitol.