

Vol. 69, Issue 27

Thursday, July 3, 2025

Press Release: WHA Applauds Bipartisan Budget for Hospitals

The Wisconsin Hospital Association released the following statement from President and CEO Kyle O'Brien praising the bipartisan budget agreement between legislative leaders and Gov. Evers that was signed into law on July 3, 2025:

"WHA is proud to have worked with the Governor and legislative leaders to craft a plan that provides unprecedented Medicaid rate support to hospitals in this state budget. This increased funding will help hospitals sustain and expand access to care for patients across Wisconsin when one-third of the state's hospitals are operating at a deficit, driven by \$1.6 billion in losses from Medicaid reimbursement.

"Wisconsin's hospitals are the cornerstone of our healthcare system and a safety net for Wisconsin families, with many services, like behavioral health and labor and delivery, provided at a loss. Many of these services simply wouldn't exist if it weren't for the commitment of hospitals and health systems.

"Hospitals must have sustainable funding if we expect them to maintain and expand critical services that communities need. We applaud the policymakers on both sides of the aisle who recognized this reality and supported a state budget that will provide significant investments in our hospital safety net."

A recent report from the Wisconsin Hospital Association found that 55 of the state's 167 hospitals were operating at a loss. A recent poll found that Wisconsin voters are overwhelmingly alarmed by hospital closures, especially in rural areas where the impacts of those closures have been felt the hardest.

O'Brien also commented on key reforms made to worker's compensation that were included in the deal, saying, "Under the budget bill, worker's compensation insurance carriers and self-funded employers would be given a different maximum rate of reimbursement for certain hospital services if they reimburse a hospital claim promptly. This timely payment reform to the worker's compensation system is something that hospitals have sought for years, as worker's compensation carriers are often the slowest to reimburse a hospital for care provided to injured workers."

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