



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AMENDMENT MEMO

2009 Assembly Bill 878

**Assembly
Amendments 1 and 2**

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2009 Assembly Bill 878

2009 Assembly Bill 878 does the following:

- Transfers \$250,000 from an Office of the Commissioner of Insurance (OCI) program revenue appropriation to a newly-created Department of Health Services (DHS) appropriation fund for a health benefits counseling grant program, created in this bill.
- Requires DHS to award funding to an organization to oversee a program to assist people in obtaining and maintaining health care services and coverage of health care expenses.
- Requires the organization that receives the grant to, in turn, allocate funding to other entities to directly provide people assistance in obtaining and maintaining health care benefits; to provide training and technical assistance to these entities; and to provide legal services to aid low-income people in obtaining and maintaining health care benefits.
- Authorizes the oversight organization to allocate funding to the entities for the following services:
 - Assisting people under age 60 in applying for, and maintaining, health care benefits.
 - Counseling people under age 60 regarding consumer issues relating to health care benefits.
 - Referring people under age 60 for legal assistance in maintaining health care benefits.
 - Coordinating health care benefits available to people under age 60 to maximize benefits for those people.

- Appealing denials of eligibility or denials of coverage for health care services.
- Coordinating health care benefits for people who have more than one source of health care coverage.
- Referring people to information and programs regarding preventive health care, chronic disease management, responsible utilization of health care services, and healthy lifestyle.
- Coordinating efforts of community members who are involved in assisting people in obtaining and maintaining health care benefits.
- Educating people about the services provided under the grant program.
- Establishes minimum knowledge requirements for people employed by the entities to provide the services.
- Prohibits an entity that receives funding, or its employees, from having a financial interest in a health insurance company or health insurance plan or from being directly involved in accrediting a hospital or nursing home.
- Requires the oversight organization to provide matching funds for the grant in the first year that DHS awards the grant and requires each entity that receives funding from the oversight organization to provide matching funds on an ongoing basis.
- Requires DHS to apply for any federal funds available for assisting people in obtaining and maintaining health care benefits.

Assembly Amendment 1

- Assembly Amendment 1 corrects a cross-reference in the bill that specifies the entities to which the oversight organization may allocate moneys, to clarify that organizations must be 501 (c) (3) entities.

Assembly Amendment 2

Assembly Amendment 2 does the following:

- Requires DHS to consult with OCI in awarding the grant to the oversight organization.
- Sets forth criteria for consideration by OCI and DHS before awarding a grant to the oversight organization.

Legislative History

On April 2, 2010, the Assembly Committee on Health and Health Care Reform recommended adoption of Assembly Amendments 1 and 2 on votes of Ayes, 11; Noes, 0; and recommended passage of the bill, as amended, on a vote of Ayes, 8; Noes, 4.

On April 9, 2010, the Joint Committee on Finance recommended adoption of Assembly Amendments 1 and 2 on votes of Ayes, 15; Noes, 0; and passage of the bill, as amended, on a vote of Ayes, 11; Noes, 4.

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