



May 31, 2012

To the Honorable Elected Officials of the State of Wisconsin:

As present **county-based** operators and providers of the Wisconsin Works (W-2) program, we are writing to express our major concerns regarding the "Request for Proposal (RFP) for Wisconsin Works (W-2) and Related Programs," RFP #CFB00144, issued by the Department of Children and Families on April 5, 2012.

With over 15 years of experience operating the Wisconsin Works (W-2) program for the State of Wisconsin, we have first-hand knowledge of these important social programs and the State residents that benefit from the program's ongoing operations. After reading the current W-2 RFP, *we wish to highlight the following concerns for you:*

- The current RFP designates very large geographic regions that do not allow for convenient and consistent access for clients to obtain W-2 and related services. We are fearful that in many counties daily W-2 and related services may be replaced with only once-a-week service access.
- This RFP jeopardizes the continued operation of the State's very successful "One-Stop-Shop" Job Centers that have served employers and W-2 clients across the State of Wisconsin for over 15 years.
- This RFP will likely dismantle the current cost-effective integrated service delivery system that exists in many parts of the State. This integrated service delivery system currently includes W-2, Emergency Assistance, Refugee Assistance, Job Access Loans, Medicaid, FoodShare, Energy Assistance, mental health services, substance abuse services, child welfare services, and in some parts of the State, child support and public health services.
- This proposal takes away local involvement, local oversight, and local responsibility for service delivery which could result in negative impacts to county residents and local county economies.
- The financial reimbursement structure and required administrative structure contained in this contract make it difficult, if not nearly impossible, for county government to effectively compete against private agencies for these services.
- This RFP does not acknowledge and capitalize upon the existing W-2 consortia partnerships already in existence in many parts of the State.
- The timeframe to respond to this RFP is not realistic for any private or public entity to adequately plan for future service delivery, especially given the magnitude of change being proposed in this RFP.
- Lastly, this RFP will force long-standing public/private partnerships to be severed, effectively destroying many cost effective and innovative service delivery systems currently operating throughout the State.

Given this lengthy and significant list of concerns, **we request that the State of Wisconsin immediately suspend the current Request for Proposal (RFP) for Wisconsin Works (W-2) and**

**Related Programs, RFP #CFB00144.** We also request that work begin to build a new W-2 RFP that fulfills the following objectives:

- Obtains input from all stakeholders involved in the W-2 Program to ensure that the future W-2 RFP will not jeopardize existing job centers, existing public/private partnerships, and existing integrated service delivery systems.
- Allows for greater flexibility on how W-2 consortia areas are formed to ensure that current W-2 providers could select their partners and form geographic areas that would capitalize on efficiencies that already exist within many consortia and public/private partnerships.
- Implements a different payment and reimbursement methodology and a more flexible administrative structure, to allow both private and public entities to successfully compete to run these important programs.
- Sets realistic time frames for agencies to respond to the new RFP realizing that if major structural changes are proposed, comprehensive planning needs to occur before responses can be written and submitted.

If you have any questions about our letter or our request to suspend the existing W-2 RFP proposal, please feel free to contact Sarah Diedrick-Kasdorf, at the Wisconsin Counties Association. Sarah can be reached at 608-663-7188 or via email at [diedrick@wicounties.org](mailto:diedrick@wicounties.org). We thank you in advance for your help and assistance with this important request.

Sincerely,

  
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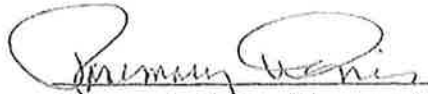
Shane Schuhmacher  
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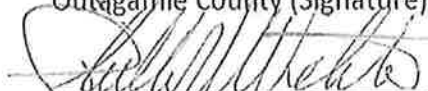
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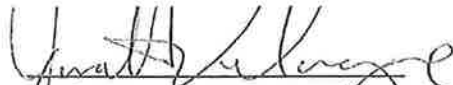
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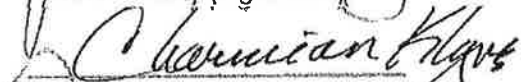
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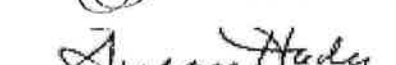
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