

**United States Senate**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4904

April 23, 2009

The Honorable Max Baucus, Chairman  
The Honorable Charles Grassley, Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Finance  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Baucus and Ranking Member Grassley:

I appreciate the commitment you have shown as leaders on health reform to reforming long term care supports and services. I share in this commitment, and believe that Congress has a rare opportunity to ease the burden of long term care on American families by emphasizing home and community-based long term care options.

Wisconsin's Family Care program is an excellent example of using home and community-based services and supports (HCBS) to reduce long term care expenditures. As you may know, Family Care is a state entitlement program for low-income and disabled adults to receive necessary care, supports, and services in their homes and communities. Family Care's flexibility is critical to its success; consumers work with social workers, registered nurses, and local Aging and Disability Resource Centers to identify what each consumer needs to remain a productive and independent citizen. Entitlement benefits can be used for such purposes as hiring help with basic daily tasks like bathing, dressing, or shopping, or with challenges like shoveling snow.

Family Care is an excellent example of the type of home and community-based care options that are the future of long term care. Through individualized and integrated programming, Family Care has significantly reduced long term care expenditures in the state. One independent assessment of Family Care estimates that the program saves the state \$1.2 million each month by allowing long term care consumers to arrange for the care they need to remain independent, and out of nursing homes. National studies confirm what we already know in Wisconsin; home and community-based care saves money. The American Association of Retired People (AARP) estimates that, on average, Medicaid can support three people utilizing home and community-based services for the same amount as one person living in a nursing home.

By all accounts, we lack a comprehensive and cohesive strategy on long term care reform. And every day that passes, more families suffer and more taxpayer dollars are lost in the current, fractured system. In 2007 alone, federal and state governments spent \$311 billion on long term care, or 3% of our nation's GDP. This is unsustainable and

ineffective. We cannot begin to reform our overall health system and get entitlement costs under control without making significant changes to our long term care system.

I commend you on your leadership in shepherding these crucial reforms through the Congress, and offer my assistance in the weeks and months to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Russell D. Feingold". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Russell" written in a stylized, overlapping manner.

Russell D. Feingold  
United States Senate