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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Members of the County Government Family

**FROM:** Kyle Christianson, Director of Government Affairs  
Sarah Diedrick-Kasdorf, Deputy Director of Government Affairs

**DATE:** October 12, 2016

**SUBJECT:** County Ambassador Program

The 2017-2018 Wisconsin State Legislature will be filled with new faces and many new ideas on shaping Wisconsin's future. Along with the new faces comes the need to inform members of the Legislature about the state-county partnership and the critical role counties play in ensuring strong, vital communities across the state.

In 2010, the Wisconsin Counties Association began the County Ambassador Program (CAP). The goal of the program is to engage county officials in the Association's efforts to educate lawmakers on the important role of county government through direct dialogue with members of the Legislature. Participants in the program work side-by-side with the WCA Government Affairs Team to promote WCA's Legislative Agenda/Platform before the Wisconsin State Legislature and state agency officials. Over the last two sessions, many of our successes can be attributed to the ability of county officials to offer policymakers real-world examples of the impact of county government on people's lives. It is our hope to build on the successes achieved through the continuation of the County Ambassador Program during the coming legislative session.

In order to strengthen our advocacy efforts, we are calling on all members of the county family to become involved in this initiative by joining the CAP Team. Members of the CAP Team are asked to come to Madison three times during the legislative session to meet with Legislators and state agency officials on issues under consideration by the Wisconsin State Legislature impacting counties. The meeting dates for 2017 are January 18, April 5, and October 25. It is our hope to have at least one representative from each county, and we encourage each of you to give great consideration to joining this effort. All county supervisors, executives, administrators, constitutional officers, and department heads are encouraged to apply.

This legislative session will present challenges for all of us. Our success during the 2015-2016 Legislative Session was built on the collective efforts of county officials working together on critical issues and we hope to see this success and partnership continued through the County Ambassador Program.

Enclosed please find additional information on this important initiative, as well as an application form. Please fill out your application form and return it to the WCA office by Friday, November 18, 2016.

Thank you for your participation in this critical effort.

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MARK D. O'CONNELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## **COUNTY AMBASSADOR PROGRAM**

The County Ambassador Program (CAP), which will soon begin its fifth session of operation, is designed to provide member counties the opportunity to work side-by-side with the WCA Government Affairs Team to promote WCA's Legislative Agenda/Platform before the Wisconsin State Legislature and state agency officials.

All county officials are encouraged to participate as members of our CAP Team including county board chairs, supervisors, executives, administrators, constitutional officers, and department heads. WCA hopes to have at least one CAP Team member from each county. The term of membership is concurrent with the legislative session.

It is anticipated that the CAP Team will meet three times during the two-year legislative session. If necessary, a fourth meeting will be scheduled in early 2018.

**CAP Team meeting dates for 2017 are as follows:**

**January 18: Discussion of WCA Legislative Agenda/priorities for the 2017-2018 Legislative Session.**

**April 5: Discussion of 2017-19 State Biennial Budget / Human Services Day at the Capitol.**

**October 25: Discussion of individual pieces of legislation. Coincides with the Fall Floor Period.**

### **EXPECTATIONS:**

- Make an effort to attend the three meetings scheduled throughout the course of the Legislative Session.
- Pre-arrange meetings with your local legislators to take place on CAP Team meeting dates.
- Lead advocacy efforts between CAP Team meetings by inviting legislators to meet with your county on a regular basis.
- Respond quickly to e-mailed action alerts.

### **EXPENSES:**

Travel costs are at your own expense. WCA will provide a continental breakfast and lunch on days the CAP Team is in Madison.

### **HOW TO JOIN:**

Fill out the attached APPLICATION/INTENT TO SERVE form, have it signed by your county board chair or county executive, and send to the WCA office, Attn: Sarah Diedrick-Kasdorf.

## **SAMPLE CAP TEAM MEETING/DAY AT THE CAPITOL**

9:00 a.m.	Welcome and Legislative Briefing
10:00 a.m.	Tips for Capitol Visits
10:30 a.m.	Scheduled Meetings with Legislators
NOON	Lunch – Luncheon Speakers
1:00 p.m.	Scheduled Meetings with Legislators
3:00 p.m.	Debriefing Session (return to hotel and fill out feedback forms)
3:30 p.m.	Adjourn



## COUNTY AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

### APPLICATION / INTENT TO SERVE

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: HOME: \_\_\_\_\_

WORK/CELL: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR STATE REPRESENTATIVE: \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR STATE SENATOR: \_\_\_\_\_

AUTHORIZATION: I concur with this nomination.

\_\_\_\_\_  
County Board Chair

or

\_\_\_\_\_  
County Executive (if applicable)

Please return by Friday, November 18 to:

Wisconsin Counties Association  
Attn: Sarah Diedrick-Kasdorf  
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Madison, WI 53703  
Fax: 608.663.7189  
diedrick@wicounties.org