

## Press Release: DRW, GWAAR Applaud Wisconsin Supreme Court Decision in WVA v. Secord

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Disability Rights Wisconsin (DRW) and the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging, Inc. (GWAAR) applaud today's decision by the Wisconsin Supreme Court to leave in place the District IV Appellate decision protecting the right of individuals under guardianship in maintaining their privacy.

Guardianship proceedings are mandated by state statute to be confidential, including a determination made during those proceedings regarding the individual's right to vote. The need for confidentiality is clear, as the mere fact that an individual is the subject of guardianship petition, or is under guardianship, may lead to improper and incorrect assumptions about that person, including their capacity to exercise their right to vote, even when a judge has determined the individual should retain that right. The confidentiality of guardianship proceedings helps address this concern, and today's ruling upholds this clear and critical understanding of Chapter 54 of Wisconsin's statutes.

DRW and GWAAR look forward to working with the Wisconsin State Legislature to support common-sense reforms to improve communications whenever an individual's right to vote is either removed or restored, thereby protect every individual's sacred and fundamental right to vote as guaranteed by the Wisconsin Constitution.

Voters with disabilities who have questions about the electoral process or their voting rights, or who encounter challenges during the voting process, are encouraged to contact the Disability Rights Wisconsin Voter Hotline at 844-DIS-VOTE (844-347-8683) or [info@disabilityvote.org](mailto:info@disabilityvote.org).

## **Organization Information**

**Disability Rights Wisconsin** (DRW) is a nonprofit organization with a mission to address the issues facing, and to advance the dignity, equality, and self-determination of, people with disabilities in Wisconsin. Disability Rights Wisconsin is designated, under federal and state law, as the protection and advocacy system for Wisconsin citizens with disabilities.

More information is available at Disability Rights Wisconsin's website: [disabilityrightswi.org](http://disabilityrightswi.org)

**The Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc.** (GWAAR) is a nonprofit agency with a mission to support lead aging agencies and to "promote, protect, and enhance the well-being of older people in Wisconsin." GWAAR operates the Wisconsin Guardianship Support Center, a leading expert on Wisconsin's guardianship law and how it impacts the right to vote.

More information is available at GWAAR's website: [gwaar.org](http://gwaar.org)