



JOEL KITCHENS

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 1ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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Rep. Kitchens votes for pre-existing conditions bill

MADISON, Wis. – In the first official floor session day of the year, Rep. Joel Kitchens (R-Sturgeon Bay) joined other Assembly Republicans in helping pass the Pre-Existing Condition Guaranteed Coverage Act.

Under the bill, if the federal Affordable Care Act is ever repealed, every individual and group health benefit plan must accept every person and employer in the state who applies for coverage, regardless of pre-existing conditions.

Assembly Republicans also made the legislation stronger by offering and approving an amendment on the floor that sets limits on annual and lifetime out-of-pocket expenses.

“If Obamacare is eventually nullified, we have taken the steps to ensure that some of our most vulnerable citizens will still be able to afford quality health care coverage,” Kitchens said. “With this bill, we are fulfilling the promise to our constituents that we believe health insurance is vital for every single person diagnosed with a pre-existing condition.”

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, nearly 852,000 people in Wisconsin have a medical condition that could prevent them from buying health insurance on their own if the ACA was no longer in place.

The legislation now goes before the Senate and, if passed, will need to be signed by Gov. Tony Evers to become state law. While Evers has suggested that he [may not support the bill](#) because it does not go as far as the ACA in regulating self-funded plans, only the federal government can administer those plans. This legislation actually does go as far as it legally can under federal law.

“I urge Gov. Evers to put politics aside and do what’s right for the citizens of Wisconsin,” Kitchens said. “The importance of guaranteeing coverage for pre-existing conditions is something everyone should be able to agree on, and this bill reaches as far as it can to accomplish that without violating federal law. This is clearly a non-partisan issue and we shouldn’t be playing political games over something as critical as health insurance coverage because it impacts each and every one of us.”

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