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Kolste Co-Authors Legislation to Strengthen Immunization Standards

MADISON – Today, Representative Debra Kolste joined a bi-partisan group of colleagues to introduce LRB 0312, a bill that would remove the ability for individuals to forego a vaccination based solely on personal beliefs. Wisconsin is one of the few states that allows waivers for opting out of vaccinations for any personal belief.

“The rise in preventable disease outbreaks is directly tied to lower vaccination levels,” said Rep. Kolste. “We should not be putting adults, children, and those with compromised immune systems at-risk for hospitalization simply because someone doesn’t want to receive a vaccination.”

Just 20 years ago, less than 1% of Wisconsin parents were opting out of vaccines. Last year, a CDC report showed that more than 5% of Wisconsin parents are checking the box to opt their children out of being vaccinated. 90% of these opt-outs were for personal reasons.

“Federal health officials are currently trying to stem one of the worst measles outbreaks in decades with 700 cases already confirmed for 2019,” Kolste added. “Wisconsin needs to be proactive and do everything possible to prevent an outbreak from occurring.”

The Wisconsin Medical Society, the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Wisconsin Public Health Association, among other medical groups, supports the legislation.

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