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# JOEL KITCHENS

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 1<sup>ST</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Contact: Rep. Joel Kitchens  
(608) 266-5350

## **Assembly passes Rep. Kitchens' birth control bill**

MADISON, Wis. – Rep. Joel Kitchens (R-Sturgeon Bay) is honored that the state Assembly has passed his bill that gives women more choices when it comes to their reproductive healthcare.

Under current state law, women can only obtain most birth control through a prescription from a physician or an advanced practice nurse who has met the necessary requirements.

Rep. Kitchens' bill, AB 36, allows pharmacists to prescribe hormonal contraceptive patches and common birth control pills. A patient must be at least 18 years old and pass a number of screenings, including a blood pressure test.

“While all drugs come with the potential for harmful side effects – even Aspirin can cause bleeding disorders – the consensus of the medical community is that birth control pills are no more dangerous than ibuprofen,” Rep. Kitchens said. “As such, nearly every major medical group supports this bill. They agree that we should not be putting up artificial barriers that prevent increased access to birth control – especially when there is no medical basis to do so.”

In addition to providing more reproductive healthcare options, AB 36 aims to decrease the number of unplanned pregnancies and abortions in the state, save taxpayer dollars and reduce generational poverty.

Evidence from states that have enacted similar legislation has shown that allowing pharmacists to prescribe birth control decreases unplanned pregnancies and, in turn, abortions. Unplanned pregnancies occur most often in young women in poverty, so it also reduces Medicaid spending and helps keep these women from being trapped in the cycle of generational poverty.

“The cost of unplanned pregnancies to our society, in both financial and human terms, is quite staggering,” Rep. Kitchens said. “Because of that, this legislative proposal is gaining popularity across the country. We do not want the residents of Wisconsin to be left behind.”

A total of 23 states – both red and blue – have already passed comparable legislation and many more are considering similar bills.

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