

Bill on insurance coverage for pre-existing conditions passes Assembly

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A bill that looks to guarantee insurance coverage for those with pre-existing conditions passed the Assembly early this morning.

The legislation arose from a GOP substitute amendment on a Dem-backed bill that was not originally on the session agenda yesterday. Instead, unanimous support for a procedural move allowed it to be pulled from the committee and taken up on the floor.

The substitute amendment, from Reps. Kevin Petersen and Joe Sanfelippo, would prohibit a health insurance policy from reducing or denying someone's claim because of a pre-existing condition. It passed just after 1:15 a.m. on a 62-35 party-line vote.

The legislation also would allow the insurance commissioner to propose a plan, which would be submitted to the Joint Finance Committee for review, to assist people with pre-existing conditions in keeping or purchasing coverage.

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But Dems argued the GOP amendment "hijacked" their original bill, AB 365, on lifetime health insurance limits, which Dems said they were backing in response to federal uncertainty over health care. Numerous procedural attempts by Dems to table the bill and avoid a vote failed.

See the substitute amendment:

<http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/raw/proposal/2017/s0098>

See the bill text:

<http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2017/related/proposals/ab365.pdf>

