

Citizen Action of Wisconsin: Vukmir makes alternate reality claim that pre-existing condition discrimination was never a problem

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In U.S. Senate debate Vukmir makes stunningly false claim that pre-existing conditions discrimination was not an issue before passage of the Affordable Care Act

Milwaukee: In a [debate](#) Monday evening U.S. Senate candidate Leah Vukmir made the startling assertion that before the passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) insurance discrimination against people with pre-existing conditions was prevented by federal law. This shockingly false claim contradicts both the historical record and the lived experiences of thousands of Wisconsinites who were subjected to discrimination before the ACA made it illegal.

In the debate Vukmir made the following statement ([starting at the 6:30 mark in the video](#))

“She [Baldwin] talks about pre-existing conditions, do understand what happens? Under federal law right now, and Senator Baldwin I don’t know if it is because you are ignorant of this or if it’s because you are trying to deceive people on this pre-existing condition issue, but here is the real issue. Under federal law before ObamaCare people with pre-existing conditions were covered, they were covered

under Medicare, Medicaid, and they were also covered under their private insurance through their employer. If ObamaCare goes away today guess what people will still have coverage for pre-existing conditions. So Senator Baldwin is lying, she is lying to the people of the state, this is the big lie that is being perpetuated across the country about pre-existing conditions. Look I would fall in front of truck before I would let people go without coverage for pre-existing conditions.”

In Leah Vukmir’s alternative reality the issue of pre-existing condition discrimination, which has been a top tier public issue for over a decade, turns out to have been “a big lie” all along. Never mind the fact that public outrage of pre-existing condition discrimination is one of the principle reasons the ACA passed in the first place and that Republicans in Congress and President Trump failed in their attempt to repeal it last year. Never mind all of the cancer survivors and many others with serious or chronic health conditions across Wisconsin who have told their heart wrenching stories of the bad old days when they were denied health coverage when they needed it most.

The fact is that before the passage of the ACA, it was legal for health insurance corporations selling on the individual market to deny coverage to people with pre-existing health conditions, charge them discriminatory rates, carve out parts of the body that would not be covered, sell substandard insurance that did not cover expensive health conditions, and impose lifetime and annual limits. It was also legal to charge discriminatory prices to small businesses who had a single employee with a health condition.

In August Citizen Action of Wisconsin [asked both U.S. Senate candidates](#) to sign a pledge to protect people with pre-existing conditions. Senator Baldwin [signed the pledge](#), while Vukmir never responded to our request.

“Leah Vukmir’s claim that pre-existing condition discrimination was never a problem would be laughable if it were not so dangerous to the lives and livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of Wisconsinites,” said Robert Kraig, Executive Director of Citizen Action of Wisconsin. “How can voters trust Vukmir to protect people from pre-existing condition discrimination when she denies that it ever existed?”

Link to news release

https://www.citizenactionwi.org/vukmir_makes_alternate_reality_claim_that_pre_existing_condition_discrimination_was_never_a_problem