

# John Nygren: Wisconsin GOP continues to lead on healthcare

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Recently, the world of healthcare has been a whirlwind of uncertainty and confusion. Recognizing the need to protect Wisconites, Republicans and Governor Scott Walker worked to provide stability and affordability to the healthcare market. Assembly Bill 887, which I voted for, seeks to improve health care access and affordability

You don't need to look far to see the disastrous effects of Obamacare and the need for a common-sense solution. Because of Obamacare, insurance choices for consumers has dwindled. According to Money Magazine, in 2018, 41% of all counties in the country will have just one insurer option on the marketplace.

Not only is access being limited, but prices are rising. It is estimated that some of the most popular plans could be victim to double-digit premium increases. In northeastern Wisconsin, the part of the state I represent, rates have increased by 100% and families are afforded only one or two options per county for plans. This is unacceptable for the hardworking families of Wisconsin. Families deserve access to high-quality, affordable healthcare, regardless of their zip code.

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Gov. Walker recently signed into law Assembly Bill 887, which directs the state to seek a federal waiver to allow operation of a state-based reinsurance plan to stabilize the marketplace. If approved, the state will cover a portion of high-cost health insurance claims for individuals who are insured through the marketplace. This seeks to address one of the problems of Obamacare: that health plans have

taken on too many high-cost individuals and not enough healthy individuals. This imbalance has crippled insurers forcing them to leave the marketplace.

Other states have taken similar steps and have been witness to great results. Minnesota, Oregon, and Alaska, have all implemented reinsurance plans. Alaska, because of its massive geographic size and small population, has the highest premiums in the country. As a result of their action, premiums grew 35% less than projected. In Minnesota, rates are at least 20% lower this year; in Oregon, they are about 7% lower. Horizon Government Affairs estimates that rates in Wisconsin will drop 13% in 2019, and 12% in 2020.

Wisconsin deserves better than Obamacare. Wisconsin deserves better than the gridlock of Washington D.C. That is why we decided to act now, before it is too late. This legislation will provide Wisconsin citizens with quality options for affordable healthcare.

*— Nygren, R-Marinette, represents the 89th Assembly District and is co-chair of the Joint Finance Committee.*