

Protect Our Care: Wisconsin Republicans' pre-existing conditions fraud

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Legislature Passes Bill Keeping Wisconsin in Pre-Existing Conditions Lawsuit, Despite Voters' Wishes Republicans Did Not Have Support to Even Pretend to Protect Pre-Existing Conditions as Walker Promised

Washington, D.C. – After hours of closed door debate, Republicans in the Wisconsin Senate failed to muster enough support to for [legislation](#) that they falsely claimed would ensure protections for people with pre-existing conditions, despite their efforts to invalidate them in federal court. This bill comes after Republicans [passed legislation](#) that seeks to deny the duly elected incoming Democratic Governor and Attorney General from withdrawing participating in Walker-Schimel-Trump's [assault](#) on pre-existing conditions in federal court. The bill passed the legislature and now heads to the Governor.

Brad Woodhouse, executive director of Protect Our Care, released the following statement in response:

"I'd like to thank the Wisconsin Republicans who just proved that all of Scott Walker's crocodile tears on the campaign trail about protecting people with pre-existing conditions were a total charade. For a decade, Wisconsin Republicans have tried to repeal the Affordable Care Act and its protections for the 2.4 million Wisconsinites living with pre-existing conditions, and that has never changed.

"By digging their heels in on their lawsuit to eliminate pre-existing conditions and repeal the Affordable Care Act, Scott Walker, Brad Schimel, and Wisconsin Republicans are proving they don't really care about the health of their constituents and that they've learned nothing from the outcome of November's election. Tony Evers and Josh Kaul were elected because of their pro-health care positions, including their pledges to withdraw from the Walker-Schimel-Trump lawsuit to overturn the Affordable Care Act and its protections for people with pre-existing conditions, and the will of the voters should be respected."

BACKGROUND:

MILLIONS OF WISCONSINITES AT RISK

2,435,700 Wisconsinites Live With A Pre-Existing Condition. About one in two Wisconsinites, 51 percent, lives with a pre-existing condition. [Center for American Progress, [4/5/17](#)]

1,187,000 Wisconsin Women And Girls Have A Pre-Existing Condition. Approximately 1,187,000 women and girls in Wisconsin live with a pre-existing condition. [Center for American Progress and the National Partnership For Women and Families, [June 2018](#)]

308,100 Wisconsin Children Already Have A Pre-Existing Condition. Roughly 308,000 Wisconsinites below age 18 live with a pre-existing condition. [Center for American Progress, [4/5/17](#)]

616,900 Older Wisconsinites Live With A Pre-Existing Condition. 616,900 Wisconsin adults between the ages of 55 and 64 live with at least one pre-existing condition, meaning attacks on these protections significantly threaten Wisconsinites approaching Medicare age. [Center for American Progress, [4/5/17](#)]

THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT OUTLAWED DISCRIMINATION BASED ON PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS — GOP LAWSUIT TO OVERTURN THE LAW BRINGS DISCRIMINATION AGAINST PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS BACK

Because Of The Affordable Care Act, Insurance Companies Can No Longer Deny Coverage Or Charge More Because Of Pre-Existing Conditions. "Under current law, health insurance companies can't refuse to cover you or charge you more just because you have a 'pre-existing condition' — that is, a health problem you had before the date that new health coverage starts." [HHS]

The ACA Outlawed Medical Underwriting, The Practice That Let Insurance Companies Charge Sick People And Women More. As the Brookings Institution [summarizes](#), "The ACA outlawed medical underwriting, which had enabled insurance carriers to court the healthiest customers while denying coverage to people likely to need costly care. The ACA guaranteed that all applicants could buy insurance and that their premiums would not be adjusted for gender or personal characteristics other than age and smoking."

The ACA Stopped Companies From Charging Women More Than Men For The Same Plan. The Affordable Care Act eliminated "gender rating," meaning American women no longer have to pay an aggregated [\\$1 billion more](#) per year than men for the same coverage.

Thanks To The Affordable Care Act, Insurance Companies Can No Longer Rescind Coverage Because of Illness. Because of the ACA, insurance companies can [no longer](#) rescind or cancel someone's coverage arbitrarily if they get sick.

HEALTH CARE WAS THE TOP ISSUE FOR WISCONSIN VOTERS

A Public Policy Polling election day [survey](#) of Wisconsin voters found that health care was the top issue for voters in the state — and that they overwhelmingly favored Democrats on it, propelling Tony Evers to victory.

- **68% of voters said that health care was either a very important issue,** or the most important issue to them. Those voters supported Evers over Scott Walker 65-33.
- When asked to name the single issue most important to them in 2018, a plurality (27%) picked health care. **Among those voters who said health care was their single most important issue in the election, Evers defeated Walker by a whopping 89-7 margin.**
- Evers especially had an advantage over Walker when it came to the issue of who voters trusted more to protect people with pre-existing conditions. **50% preferred Evers to protect pre-existing conditions to only 41% who preferred Walker.**
- **Scott Walker's support for the Republican health care repeal agenda hurt him badly.** Only 32% of voters said his support for repeal made them more likely to vote for him, while 47% said it made them less likely to support him.
- **An overwhelming majority of Wisconsinites want to see the Affordable Care Act stay in place-** 62% think it should be kept with fixes made to it as necessary, compared to only 32% of voters who support repealing it.