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Walker ups health care pledge

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Gov. Scott Walker pledged the state will pass a bill to guarantee pre-existing condition coverage using “the exact same language that’s in the Affordable Care Act.”

Walker’s comments today, during a campaign stop in Waukesha, go further than he has before in committing Wisconsin to safeguarding pre-existing conditions.

“No matter what happens in the courts or in the Congress, in Wisconsin we will codify that, the exact same language that’s in the Affordable Care Act, we’ll make sure that everyone living with a pre-existing condition is covered here in the state,” the guv told reporters this morning.

He also denounced the “unprecedented lies in terms of pre-existing conditions” that he says Republicans are facing this cycle, but added: “We’re cutting through that, we’re making the case known that in this state we will always cover people with pre-existing conditions.”

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Dem guv candidate Tony Evers, who has knocked Walker’s opposition to Obamacare and the state’s involvement in a lawsuit looking to dismantle the ACA, said in a statement politicians like the guv “are always talking out of both sides of their mouth and telling last-minute lies like this.”

“The fact is that Scott Walker spent the past eight years trying to repeal the Affordable Care Act and its protections for pre-existing conditions,” he said. “I’m going to protect coverage for people with pre-existing conditions, and Wisconsinites trust me on this issue because that’s what I’ve said since day one.”

Republicans in the state Assembly this session signed off on a bill to safeguard pre-existing conditions, though the legislation failed to pass the Senate despite Walker’s

call in his January State of the State speech for the chamber to pass the bill.

Walker also touted the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' approval yesterday of the state's plan to institute work requirements for some Medicaid recipients.

"We believe freedom and prosperity don't come from the clumsy hand of the government," he said. "They come from empowering people to live their own lives and control their own destinies through the dignity and support of hard work."

Walker didn't weigh in on President Trump's possible plan to end birthright citizenship for the children of non-citizens born in the U.S., saying he'll leave the debate up to Speaker Paul Ryan, who was campaigning with the guv today, "and others at the federal level."

See a WisEye video of the guv's comments.