

WisDems: Recapping Vukmir's record of working for insurance companies

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Vukmir has repeatedly sided with insurance companies over Wisconsinites in need of coverage, now she's campaigning on gutting protections for people with pre-existing conditions and letting insurers write their own rules

MADISON — Despite the fact that [75% of Americans want to maintain Affordable Care Act protections](#) for people with pre-existing conditions, **Republican U.S. Senate candidate Leah Vukmir** [has centered her campaign on repealing the Affordable Care Act and gutting protections](#) for Wisconsinites with pre-existing conditions.

Since her earliest days in Wisconsin's state legislature, Vukmir has consistently supported letting powerful insurance companies write their own rules and deny coverage to Wisconsinites in need of health care treatments. Here's an overview of that record:

- **Blocking and Voting Against Oral Chemotherapy Coverage** — Vukmir initially blocked an oral chemotherapy coverage bill, and then was the only Senator to twice [vote with insurance companies](#) and against Wisconsin cancer patients, [opposing a highly bipartisan bill](#) to expand coverage.
- **Fighting Coverage for Kids' Cochlear Implants and Hearing Aids** — Vukmir [was a vocal opponent of a 2009 bill](#) under which "insurance companies would be required to cover hearing aids and cochlear implants for Wisconsin children." In opposing the bill, Vukmir sided with insurance companies, callously [arguing that it was too expensive](#) to require insurance companies to help hearing-impaired kids hear.
- **Blocking and Opposing Coverage for Mental Health Care and Substance Abuse**

Treatments — For years, Vukmir has [similarly sided with insurance companies in blocking and voting against](#) requiring insurance companies to expand coverage for mental health care and substance abuse treatments. Vukmir used her power as committee chair to block a number of measures and vote against others that would have expanded coverage, [earning a rebuke from Wisconsin mental health care advocates](#) last week.

As she runs for U.S. Senate, Vukmir is defending this record of siding with powerful insurance companies over people, and campaigning hard on Republican repeal plans that would gut protections for Wisconsinites with pre-existing conditions, which would bring back the days when insurance companies could jack up prices on sick Wisconsinites.

But should anyone be surprised? As state Sen. Jon Erpenbach [wrote in a Cap Times column this week](#): “I’m not surprised to see [Leah Vukmir] standing by her record of siding with insurance companies over Wisconsin patients. Vukmir never had any shame back then, so why would she show contrition now?”