

U.S. Rep. Kind: Bipartisan Bill to Lower Out-of-Pocket, Over-the-Counter Drug Costs for Wisconsin Families Passes Out of Committee

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Washington, DC—Last week, the **House Committee on Ways and Means** passed **Rep. Ron Kind's** bipartisan *Restoring Access to Medication Act*, which will improve access to care and help families afford the medications and other health care products they need. The bill will give individuals the ability to use Health Savings Accounts (HSA) and Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) to purchase over-the-counter medications and menstrual care products.

“Cold and flu season is right around the corner and most Wisconsinites will have to pay steep prices for over-the-counter medicines to treat their symptoms. Too often, families struggle with rising out-of-pocket health care costs,” said **Rep. Ron Kind**. “The *Restoring Access to Medication Act* is commonsense, bipartisan legislation that will allow families to use their health savings accounts to purchase the items they need to stay healthy while keeping more money in their pockets.”

Over 22 million Americans utilize HSAs, and over 33 million Americans contribute to an FSA. Since 2011, Americans have been prevented from using tax-preferred accounts to purchase non-prescription over-the-counter medicines. Over-the-

counter medication can be used for a wide range of issues including pain management, smoking cessation, allergies, and much more. Most families depend on over-the-counter medicines as their first-line defense to meeting their families' health care needs. In fact, a study by the Consumer Healthcare Products Association found that the availability of over-the-counter medicines leads to \$146 billion in annual savings when families can take advantage of lower-cost over-the-counter medicines instead of unnecessary doctors' visits or taking time off work.

The Ways and Means Committee is the most powerful – and the oldest – committee in the House of Representatives. It has jurisdiction over tax measures, the management of public debt, trade and tariff laws, Social Security, Medicare, pensions, and many other economic growth measures.