

Sen. Darling, Rep. Kurtz: Koreen's law puts patients first new bill removes barriers to crucial treatments

Posted on Thursday, Oct 21, 2021

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Madison - When a patient is going through life-saving medical treatments like chemotherapy, the last thing they need is for their insurance company to make them jump through hoops. That's exactly what is happening in our state. On Friday, State Senator Alberta Darling and State Representative Tony Kurtz introduced Koreen's law, legislation that will ban "white bagging" by insurance companies. Senator Darling says the bill removes unnecessary hurdles.

"Going through cancer treatment is stressful enough, the last thing anyone needs is for their insurance company to make it more difficult to get the medicine they need," Darling said, "Our bill removes barriers to care and makes sure people get the drugs they need when they need them."

The bill is named after Eau Claire resident Koreen Holmes. Koreen was eight months pregnant when she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Soon after giving birth, she began chemotherapy treatments. Months into her treatment, Koreen's insurance company told her they wouldn't pay for the medication provided by her hospital any longer. Instead, her medicine would need to be shipped to the hospital from a specialty pharmacy chosen by the patient's insurance company, outside of the hospital's normal supply chain.

This raised red flags for her oncologist who became concerned her team couldn't guarantee they would have the drugs when needed or whether the medication would still be safe and effective after being shipped. While Koreen eventually received a 90-day exemption to finish her treatment, many Wisconsinites have not been as fortunate.

"Patients should always be put first when it comes to their healthcare needs."

Representative Kurtz said, “There is no reason a person should show up for life-saving treatments at a hospital, and the medicine isn’t there. This bill puts an end to that.”

Koreen’s story can be found by visiting www.PatientsFirstWI.com/

Senator Darling and Representative Kurtz are currently seeking cosponsors of Koreen’s law.