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Rep. Jimmy Anderson Sits with Senator Baldwin and Citizens Action of Wisconsin Against the Republican Healthcare Plan

Madison - After failing to move forward with a vote on their so-called healthcare bill, Republicans in Washington are now quibbling over how much worse they can make their legislation. While it already takes healthcare away from 22 million Americans, brings back lifetime benefit limits, increases premiums and deductibles, and puts at risk essential health benefits, Senator Ron Johnson wants to also remove protections for pre-existing conditions. Simply put, this bill is cruel and is only going to get crueler.

For me, this legislation is deeply personal. It was back in 2010 when a drunk driver murdered my mother, my father, my little brother, and left me paralyzed from the chest down. It wasn't long after my surgery to stabilize my spine that my health insurance company sent me a letter saying that I was nearing my lifetime maximums and that I would be kicked off my insurance. My wife and I were shocked. Despite playing by the rules and paying our premiums every month, we were looking at financial ruin.

Luckily, a few days later, we received another letter saying that the provisions of the Affordable Care Act have kicked in eliminating lifetime maximums. I don't say this lightly when I say that the ACA saved me. I wouldn't be here today, being able to serve the people of Wisconsin, if it wasn't for the protections that were put in place by the ACA.

But all of that will be gone if the Senate passes their bill. States will eliminate essential health benefits, which covers things like maternity care, mental health care, and prescription drug coverage, it'll bring back yearly and lifetime caps, it will drastically harm Medicaid putting disabled children and seniors in nursing homes at risk, and if Senator Ron Johnson gets his way, it will allow insurers to discriminate against the thousands of Americans with pre-existing conditions. Suffice it to say, this bill is a travesty and anyone who wants to represent the people of Wisconsin should repudiate it.

Because ultimately, what this fight is really about is human dignity. No one should have to beg or go broke because their child gets cancer or if they have a stroke or if they get hit by a drunk driver. It is simply immoral. The people of Wisconsin and the people of the United States deserve better than this health care bill.

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