



Wisconsin State Assembly

Press Release
For Immediate Release

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ASSEMBLY REPUBLICANS ANNOUNCE HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN *Proposal lowers cost without additional state spending*

MADISON) Health insurance costs would go down under a four-point plan offered today by Assembly Republicans. The plan would give more Wisconsin citizens access to affordable health care insurance without additional state spending.

"I hear more about the high cost of health care from my constituents than I do about high taxes," said Representative Bonnie Ladwig (R-Mount Pleasant) who chairs the Assembly Insurance Committee. "This is becoming a huge problem and there is no easy answer."

"According to a survey put together by the Kaiser Family Foundation, private health insurance premiums increased 13.9% in 2003 – the third consecutive year of double-digit increases," stated Representative Mark Gottlieb (R-Port Washington). "These increases cannot continue. The price of health care is already out of reach for many individuals."

"This plan encourages individuals to be in control of their health care dollars," said Representative Becky Weber (R-Green Bay), a member of the Assembly Insurance Committee. "An engaged and informed consumer is a smart consumer and the end result is lower health care costs for everyone."

The Assembly Republican plan includes the following proposals:

- 1. The Cooperative Healthcare Purchasing Alliance ,*
- 2. Benefit flexibility*
- 3. Self-insurance*
- 4. Medical Savings Accounts*

The four-point plan will now be drafted into legislation and referred to Ladwig's committee. The Assembly Republicans say they welcome public input and plan to work with various interests groups on their plan.

"Assembly Republicans realize the crushing impact that rising health care costs are having on our families," said Representative Scott Jensen (R-Brookfield). "In three years these pilot projects may become permanent answers to controlling the cost of health care."

"As the newest member of the Assembly I am pleased to be part of a plan that establishes a competitive medical marketplace, involves no state spending, and offers consumer flexibility," said Mark Honadel (R-South Milwaukee). "This plan keeps health care costs down and is a major step towards a solution to our health care crisis."