
Wisconsin Association of Health Plans

The Voice of Wisconsin's Community-Based Health Plans

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Finance Committee Chooses Market Competition and Consumer Choice

(Madison) – Nancy Wenzel, Chief Executive Officer of the Wisconsin Association of Health Plans, offered the following statements on the 16 – 0 vote by the Joint Committee on Finance to reject contracts to self-fund the State Group Health Program. The Committee also voted 16 – 0 to maintain the current, fully insured structure and specify that the Group Insurance Board pursue savings of \$63.9 million largely through strategies used effectively in recent years: negotiating with health plans, drawing down excess reserves and implementing limited plan design changes.

“The Finance Committee action was a vote for competition over consolidation.

“Wisconsin’s health insurance market is the most competitive in the country. Consumers across the state have multiple choices of quality doctors and health plans, including some of the highest quality health plans in the country. With market competition, the State Group Health Program saved \$283 million over nine years and kept cost increases well below state and national averages. Committee members elected to stay with a proven winner for taxpayers and state employees.

“We appreciate the leadership of the Finance Committee Co-Chairs, Representative John Nygren and Senator Alberta Darling, and the commitment of all Committee members to ensuring consumers and taxpayers can continue to enjoy the benefits of choice and competition.

“For nearly four decades, Wisconsin’s community-based health plans have been committed partners of the Department of Employee Trust Funds and Group Insurance Board in making the State Group Health Program a model for the nation. We look forward to continuing our relationship in providing the highest quality, most cost-effective health care benefits and services to state employees and their families.”

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