



**WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE**  
P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 18, 2019

Contact: Senator Dale Kooyenga (608) 266-2512  
Representative Bob Kulp (608) 267-0280

### **Sen. Kooyenga & Rep. Kulp Introduce Bill To Help Cancer Patients With Clinical Trial Expenses**

**Madison, WI** – Cancer is one of the leading causes of death in Wisconsin, and cancer clinical trials provide the best evidence of the effectiveness of potential new life-sustaining treatments. Unfortunately, only a small fraction of patients willing to participate in a trial actually enroll due to barriers making participation impossible. Wisconsin lawmakers are introducing a bill to address economic barriers and provide patients equal access to cancer clinical trials.

Sponsored by Senator Dale Kooyenga (R-Brookfield) and Representative Bob Kulp (R-Stratford), the bill paves the way for increased participation in clinical trials by allowing patient reimbursement of expenses associated with their participation in a cancer clinical trial. Specifically, the bill clarifies that providing reimbursement to patients is not considered undue inducement or coercive to participate in a cancer clinical trial, and that organizations and others may offer financial support to patients to cover ancillary costs through their support of a reimbursement entity or program.

“Today, patients are coming from much further distances to go to special treatment facilities to participate in cancer clinical trials, and out-of-pocket costs that aren’t covered by the cancer clinical trial site or sponsor can add up quickly, creating financial barriers to patient participation,” said Rep. Kulp. “Our bill will help open the door to cancer patients who want to participate in a clinical trial, but who can’t because they don’t have the personal funds to cover expenses like travel and lodging during their treatment.”

Being able to translate medical findings from research to practice relies largely on having a robust and diverse patient participation in cancer clinical trials. However, recent national studies have found that patient households making less than \$50,000 annually were about 30 percent less likely to participate in clinical trials. Limiting income disparities is important for ensuring enrollment and equitable access to trials.

Approximately 20 percent of cancer clinical trials fail due to insufficient patient enrollment, and from the perspective of equitable trial subject selection, Sen. Kooyenga agreed this legislation is needed. “If the only people participating in research are those who can afford paying the out-of-pocket costs, that could limit who can be recruited into a study,” said Sen. Kooyenga. “As lawmakers it’s important to do what we can to break down known barriers in order to have fully enrolled clinical trials with a diverse pool of patients.”

Because raising awareness about economic barriers and addressing them is important to accelerating cancer research progress, Rep. Kulp and Sen. Kooyenga are confident the bill has a good chance of passage.

“Cancer patients shouldn’t have to decide between living expenses and hope,” said Rep. Kulp. “I’m eager to work with Sen. Kooyenga to push this bill forward in order to make it easier and affordable for cancer patients to participate in clinical trials that could potentially help improve their quality of life and chance of survival.”

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Marshfield Health Care System, the Medical College of Wisconsin and the UW School of Medicine and Public Health support this legislation. Currently, the bill is being circulated for co-sponsors prior to its official introduction.

###