

WI-SEN WATCH

A PROJECT OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF WISCONSIN

VUKMIR REPEATEDLY OPPOSED REQUIRING INSURANCE COMPANIES TO EXPAND COVERAGE FOR MENTAL HEALTH CARE AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENTS

Leah Vukmir repeatedly opposed legislation requiring insurance companies to expand coverage for Wisconsinites' mental health and substance abuse treatments, siding with insurance and business advocacy groups over Wisconsinites in need of health care coverage.

- In 2004, Vukmir was one of just ten representatives to oppose mental health parity legislation that expanded coverage by prohibiting insurance companies from including prescription drug and diagnostic testing in coverage limits. The bill was supported by Republicans and Democrats in both chambers, heavily backed by the Republican Senate Majority Leader, and endorsed by a wide range of health care, mental health, disability rights, and advocacy groups that supported and lobbied for its passage. In opposing the legislation, Vukmir sided with insurance and business advocacy groups.*
- In 2007, Vukmir, as chair of the Assembly Committee on Health and Healthcare Reform, allowed three mental health bills to die in her committee, holding a public hearing for just one of the three bills. Two of the bills expanded outpatient treatment options for mental health and substance abuse (of those two, one was introduced in the Assembly and referred to Vukmir's committee, while the other was introduced and passed through the Senate before being referred to her committee). The third bill required insurance companies to expand coverage for mental health care, by mandating parity for mental health coverage.*
- In 2010, Vukmir voted against the Mental Health Parity Act, which sought to close gaps in the federal Wellstone-Domenici Mental Health Parity Act of 2009. In voting against the measure, Vukmir opposed requiring that insurance companies cover treatment for mental health or substance abuse problems as comprehensively as they would other treatments. Vukmir's opposition aligned her with business advocacy groups that similarly opposed the legislation, while a wide range of health care, mental health, disability rights, and advocacy groups supported and lobbied for the legislation.*

2004: Vukmir Was One Of Ten Representatives To Oppose Mental Health Parity Legislation

Leah Vukmir Was One Of Ten Representatives To Oppose Mental Health Parity Legislation Despite Support From Republican Senate Leader

2004: Vukmir Was One Of Only Ten Representatives To Oppose Mental Health Parity Legislation, Prohibiting Insurance Coverage Limits From Including Prescription Drug And Diagnostic Costs For Mental Health And Substance Abuse

Vukmir Opposed A Bill Prohibiting Insurance Coverage Limits From Including Prescription Drug And Diagnostic Costs For Mental Health And Substance Abuse

Vukmir Voted Against A Bill Prohibiting Insurance Coverage Limits From Including Costs Related To Prescription Drugs And Diagnostic Testing. [[Senate Bill 71](#), 2004 Wisconsin Senate Journal, [03/11/2004](#)]

- **Senate Bill 71 Prohibited Health Insurance Coverage Limits From Including Prescription Drug Costs And Diagnostic Testing.** “Act 178 specifies that the dollar coverage limits related to the treatment of nervous and mental disorders and alcoholism and other drug abuse problems do not include the costs incurred for either prescription drugs or diagnostic testing. The Act defines the term diagnostic testing to mean the procedures used to exclude the existence of conditions other than nervous or mental disorders or alcoholism or other drug abuse problems. The Department of Health and Family Services is authorized to specify, by rule, the diagnostic testing procedures that are not included under the coverage limits. Act 178 also clarifies that, if an insurer pays less than the amount that a provider charges, the required coverage limits apply to the amount actually paid by the insurer, rather than to the amount charged by the provider.” [Wisconsin Legislative Council, [04/22/2004](#)]
- **Senate Bill 71 Was Passed And Signed Into Law As 2003 Wisconsin Act 178.** [Senate Bill 71, 2004 Wisconsin Senate Journal, [04/07/2004](#)]

Vukmir Was One Of Only Ten Representatives To Oppose Legislation Increasing Mental Health Parity In Wisconsin

Vukmir Was One Of Ten Representatives To Oppose Senate Bill 71. [[Senate Bill 71](#), 2004 Wisconsin Senate Journal 877, [03/11/2004](#)]

- **89 Representatives Supported Senate Bill 71.** [[Senate Bill 71](#), 2004 Wisconsin Senate Journal 877, [03/11/2004](#)]

Wisconsin Mental Health Parity Bill (Senate Bill 71) Passed The Wisconsin Senate In 29-4 Vote.

“On Tuesday, the state Senate adopted one of a pair of mental health ‘parity’ bills meant to bring such coverage more in line with that for physical ailments. The bill, SB 71, which passed 29-4, exempts the cost of prescription drugs and diagnostic testing from the cap.” [Wisconsin State Journal, [03/03/2004](#)]

- **Senate Bill 71 Passed The Wisconsin Senate In 29-4 Vote.** [[Senate Bill 71](#), 2004 Wisconsin Senate Journal 653, [03/02/2004](#)]

Senate Bill 71 Sought Increased Parity For Mental Health Insurance Coverage

Senate Bill 71 Prohibited Health Insurance Coverage Limits From Including Prescription Drug Costs And Diagnostic Testing.

“Act 178 specifies that the dollar coverage limits related to the treatment of nervous and mental disorders and alcoholism and other drug abuse problems do not include the costs incurred for either prescription drugs or diagnostic testing. The Act defines the term diagnostic testing to mean the procedures used to exclude the existence of conditions other than nervous or mental disorders or alcoholism or other drug abuse problems. The Department of Health and Family Services is authorized to specify, by rule, the diagnostic testing procedures that are not included under the coverage limits. Act 178 also clarifies that, if an insurer pays less than the amount that a provider charges, the required coverage limits apply to the amount actually paid by the insurer, rather than to the amount charged by the provider.” [Wisconsin Legislative Council, [04/22/2004](#)]

Senate Bill 71 Was One Of Two “Mental Health ‘Parity’ Bills Meant To Bring Such Coverage More In Line With That For Physical Ailments.” “On Tuesday, the state Senate adopted one of a pair of mental health ‘parity’ bills meant to bring such coverage more in line with that for physical ailments. The

bill, SB 71, which passed 29-4, exempts the cost of prescription drugs and diagnostic testing from the cap." [Wisconsin State Journal, 03/03/2004]

Republican Senate Majority Leader Wanted Mental Health Parity Legislation (Senate Bill 71) Signed Into Law

Wisconsin Senate Majority Leader: "The Last Three Sessions, The Senate Has Passed Mental Health Parity [...] I Would Like A Bill Passed That's Signed Into Law."

Senate Majority Leader Mary Panzer: "The Last Three Sessions, The Senate Has Passed Mental Health Parity [...] I Would Like A Bill Passed That's Signed Into Law." "Senate Majority Leader Mary Panzer, R-West Bend, said the bill would 'clearly pass' her house but said she is still negotiating with the Republican leadership of the Assembly on a final round of legislation this session, including the parity bill. 'The last three sessions, the Senate has passed mental health parity,' Panzer said. 'We can pass it through the Senate again and have it die. I would like a bill passed that's signed into law.'" [Wisconsin State Journal, 03/03/2004]

Health Care And Patient Stakeholders Supported Passage Of Senate Bill 71

Mental Health, Disabilities, And Medical Organizations' Representatives Testified In Support Of Mental Health Parity Legislation (Senate Bill 71)

SUPPORT	<p>The following people appeared in favor of this bill:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Matt Kiralx, State Independent Living Council, Wausau• Kathryn Shug, Learning Disabilities Association of Wisconsin• Russell Gardners, Jr, Association of Psychiatrists, Mt. Horeb• Mary Lou Burger, Oak Creek• Shel Gross, Mental Health Association, Madison• Frank Ryan, NAMI, Middleton• Catherine Beilman, National Association for the Mentally Ill, Madison• James Curtin, Madison• Jennifer Ondrejka, WI Council on Developmental Disabilities, Madison• Michael Miller, M.D., Wisconsin Medical Society, Madison• John Grace, WI Association of Family and Children's Agencies, Madison
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- Antoinette Burton, Milwaukee
- Jeff Percy, Brookfield
- Dave Hansen, State Senator
- Legislative Liaison Gary Radloff, Department of Health and Family Services
- Arthur Koch, NAMI, Waukesha
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The following people registered in favor of this bill:

- Secretary Helene Nelson, Department of Health and Family Services
- Jeff Spitzen-Resnier, WI. Coalition for Advocacy, Madison
- Louie Schubert, WI. Association of Health Plans, Madison
- Lisa Maroney, UW Medical Foundation, Madison
- Phil Newenfeldt, 5333 West Bluemond Road, Milwaukee
- Liz Buchen, Lutheran Social Services, Madison
- Michael Blumenfeld, WI. Jewish Conference, Madison
- Dianne Greenlay, WI. Coalition for Advocacy, Madison
- Clare McArdle, League of Women Voters, WI, Madison
- Alice O'Connor, Wisconsin Medical Society, Madison
- Sarah Bowen, WI. Psychological Association, Madison
- Charity Eleson, WI Council on Children and Families, Madison
- Peter DeSantis, Wausau
- Representative David Cullen, 13th Assembly District
- Representative John Lehman, 62nd Assembly District
- Marc Herstand, National Association of Social Workers, WI Chapter, Madison
- Reverend Sue Maline Larson, Lutheran Office for Public Policy in WI, Madison
- Mickey Beil, Dane County, Madison
- Mark Wadium, Outagamie County Board of Supervisors, Appleton
- John Huebscher, Wisconsin Catholic Conference, Madison

[Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 2, [11/22/2003](#)]

Seventeen Health Care, Government And Advocacy Organizations Lobbied In Support Of Mental Health Parity Legislation (Senate Bill 71)

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Seventeen Health Care, Government And Advocacy Organizations Lobbied In Support Of Senate Bill 71:

- AFSCME Council 11
- Dane County
- Kenosha County
- League Of Women Voters Of Wisconsin Inc.
- Lutheran Office For Public Policy In Wisconsin
- Mental Health Association In Milwaukee County
- Milwaukee Jewish Council For Community Relations Inc.
- National Association Of Social Workers- Wisconsin Chapter
- Outagamie County Board Of Supervisors
- Wisconsin Association Of Family And Children's Agencies
- Wisconsin Catholic Conference
- Wisconsin Coalition For Advocacy

- **Wisconsin Coalition Of Independent Living Centers**
- **Wisconsin Council On Children And Families**
- **Wisconsin Medical Society**
- **Wisconsin Nurses Association**
- **Wisconsin State AFL-CIO**

[Wisconsin Ethics Commission, Eye on Lobbying, Accessed [09/18/2018](#)]

Seven Health Care And Patient Advocacy Organizations Submitted Letters In Support Of Mental Health Parity (Senate Bill 71) To The Committee On Health, Children, Families, Aging And Long-Term Care Public Hearing Committee Record

The Wisconsin Medical Society Supported Senate Bill 71

Wisconsin Medical Society: “Physicians Who Treat Individuals With Diseases Of The Mind Are Grateful For Your Efforts On SB 71.” “On behalf of more than 10,000 members statewide, the Wisconsin Medical Society urges passage of SB 71 as a modest improvement for individuals who seek mental health services. This legislation eliminates the diagnostic testing and cost of prescription drugs from being counted against the current insurance caps for mental health services. The Society feels this legislation minimally protects the status quo for individuals who seek help by enabling them to spend more of their insurance dollars on treatment as costs associated with testing and pharmaceuticals continue to increase. Currently these non-treatment costs fall inside the insurance cap, leaving less money for actual treatment. [...] The Society is hopeful that after years of this legislation passing one house only to languish in another before adjournment, your action will encourage the Assembly to pass SB 71 and send it to the Governor before adjournment this year. Thank you for your support of SB 71. Physicians who treat individuals with diseases of the mind are grateful for your efforts on SB 71. They believe it is a step in the right direction in addressing and treating the needs of this complex set of health conditions with their patients.” [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 10, [11/22/2003](#)]

The League Of Women Voters Of Wisconsin, Inc. Supported Senate Bill 71

League Of Women Voters Of Wisconsin: Senate Bill 71 Offers “Good Progress Toward The Eventual Goal Of Complete Parity For Mental Health Care.” “For over fifteen years, the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin (LWVWI) has been advocating for mental health insurance parity. We believe that insurance companies should provide payments for participation in all phases of mental health treatment programs, equally, as they do for other types of in-patient and out-patient treatment. Despite increased evidence that mental illness symptoms are a result of brain chemistry malfunctions, and that medications can alter symptoms, there remains opposition to including this category of illness in health insurance coverage. [...] Both SB-71 and SB-72 address these issues thoroughly. They offer good progress toward the eventual goal of complete parity for mental health care. We urge this committee to recommend that parity be included in your recommendations for ways that Wisconsin can control health insurance costs.” [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 11, [11/22/2003](#)]

The Wisconsin Association Of Family And Children’s Agencies Supported Senate Bill 71

The Wisconsin Association Of Family And Children’s Agencies: Senate Bill 71 “Will Do A Great Deal To Increase Individuals’ Access” To Mental Illness And Substance Abuse Treatment. “The Wisconsin Association of Family and Children’s Agencies (WAFCA) strongly supports passage of Senate Bills 71 and 72 which would modify the mental health insurance coverage requirements. [...] Full coverage of mental illness and substance abuse treatment, is not just about allowing a few people access to ‘extra’ services that they can really get along without. It is about allowing people access to services that will improve their health status, reduce their use of physicians and hospitals for symptoms related to their mental illness, reducing government expenditures, and reducing the number of parents and children who

end up in corrections or child welfare because their illnesses remain unaddressed. While SB 71 and SB 72 will not allow full coverage of mental illness and substance abuse treatment, they will do a great deal to increase individuals' access to these services." [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 12, [11/22/2003](#)]

The Wisconsin Council On Children And Families Supported Senate Bill 71

The Wisconsin Council On Children And Families: Senate Bill 71: Would "Reduce Reliance On Public Programs And Increase Timely Access For Insured Individuals To Services For Mental Illnesses." "The Wisconsin Council on Children and Families urges you to support passage of Senate Bills 71 and 72, which would increase the mental health insurance coverage requirements. Passage of these bills will improve access to mental health services for insured families in your district and will begin to reduce fiscal pressures on public programs that fill the gap when people are denied access by private insurance. [...] When private health insurance doesn't pay for care, government does. State and local governments pay through Medicaid, BadgerCare and Community Aids. Increasing access to services through private insurance would reduce reliance on these public programs. The Council urges you to support SB 71 and SB 72 to reduce reliance on public programs and increase timely access for insured individuals to services for mental illnesses." [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 14, [11/22/2003](#)]

The Racine County Chapter Of The National Alliance On Mental Illness Supported Senate Bill 71

Racine County NAMI: "This Compromise Moves Us One Short Step Closer To Equality With Health Care Coverage Provided For Other Brain Disorders And For Illnesses Of All Other Organs Of The Body." "The Racine County NAMI Consumer Advocacy Team would very much like to see Senate Bills 71 and 72 become law. As mental health advocates and also persons living with mental illness, each member of our Consumer Advocacy Team is very concerned about parity in mental health care. Because we each have a mental illness ourselves and are in recovery, we know that treatment works – that persons who receive adequate care for their mental illnesses can live productive and fulfilling lives. The present mandated minimums on insurance coverage for mental health and addictive disorders are used by many insurance companies as maximums and are preventing many mental health consumers from receiving the care necessary to launch them on the road to recovery. Equally damaging is the stigma and discrimination that the current law promotes. [...] Although far from parity in coverage for mental health and addictive disorders, Senate Bills 71 and 72 should provide some relief to those individuals and families besieged by these devastating illnesses. This compromise moves us one short step closer to equality with health care coverage provided for other brain disorders and for illnesses of all other organs of the body. It is the least our state government can do for some of its most vulnerable citizens. It is the least you can do to promote the end of discrimination in our great Nation." [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 18, [11/22/2003](#)]

Access to Independence Supported Senate Bill 71

Access To Independence: "It Is A Step In The Right Direction And The Least That We Can Do For People In Our Community Who Experience Mental Illness And Substance Abuse Disabilities." "Access to Independence is an independent living center that seeks to promote independence and self-determination for people with all types of disabilities. In our daily interactions with consumers, we witness firsthand the frustration people experience trying to obtain needed services. Numerous barriers exist including long waiting lists for community services and inequities in health insurance coverage. It is this latter issue that SB 71 and SB 72 seek to address. [...] Evidence clearly shows that mental illness and addictive disorders can be as effectively treated as physical illnesses. Treatment also saves money in the long run by preventing costly hospitalizations, lost wages and the need for other public benefits. It is a matter of simple fairness that people with mental illness and substance abuse receive comparable coverage. These two bills fall short of providing full parity but it is a step in the right direction and the least

that we can do for people in our community who experience mental illness and substance abuse disabilities.” [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 25, [11/22/2003](#)]

Coalition for Fairness in Mental Health and Substance Abuse Insurance Supported Senate Bill 71

Coalition For Fairness In Mental Health And Substance Abuse Insurance: “We Believe It Is Time To Take This Important Step.” “The two bills, SB71 and SB72, have been referred to the Senate Health, children, Families, Aging and Long-Term Care Committee, chaired by Senator Roessler. While the bills stop short of creating parity in coverage of mental health and addictive disorders, they would increase the mandated minimum coverage currently in statute and more clearly define how costs are allocated to these mandated minimums. The bills do not create a new mandate but, rather, provide that mental health and substance abuse coverage would be no worse than it was in 1985, when the mandated minimums were first enacted. We believe it is time to take this important step. [...] SB71 and SB72 recognize that, for a variety of reasons, the Legislature has been reluctant to enact comprehensive insurance parity for mental health and substance abuse disorders. These bills represent a significant compromise and deserve your full support.” [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 27, [11/22/2003](#)]

Insurance And Business Advocacy Groups Opposed Senate Bill 71 “Because It Would Drive Up Premiums” An Estimated 32 Cents To \$1.25 For Enrollees

Insurance And Business Advocacy Representatives Registered Their Opposition To Mental Health Parity Legislation (Senate Bill 71)

OPPOSITION	<p>The following person appeared in opposition to this bill:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dan Schwartzter, WI. Association of Health Underwriters, Madison <p>The following people registered in opposition to this bill:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ron Kuehn, Wisconsin Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors, 2 E Mifflin St, Ste 600, Madison, WI• R.J. Pirlot, Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce, Madison• Bill Smith, NFIB, Madison• Dan Schwartzter, WI Association of Provider Networks, Madison
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[Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 3, [11/22/2003](#)]

Three Insurance And Business Groups Lobbied Against Passage Of Mental Health Parity Legislation (Senate Bill 71) “Because It Would Drive Up Premiums” An Estimated 32 Cents To \$1.25 For Enrollees

Three Insurance And Business Advocacy Groups Lobbied Against Passage Of Senate Bill 71

Three Insurance And Business Advocacy Groups Lobbied Against Senate Bill 71:

- American Medical Security
- Health Insurance Association Of America
- Wisconsin Manufacturers And Commerce

[Wisconsin Ethics Commission, Eye on Lobbying, Accessed [09/18/2018](#)]

Wisconsin State Journal: “Insurers And Business Groups Oppose The Bill Because It Would Drive Up Premiums” An Estimated 32 Cents To \$1.25 For Enrollees. “Senate Majority Leader Mary Panzer, R-West Bend, said the bill would ‘clearly pass’ her house but said she is still negotiating with the Republican leadership of the Assembly on a final round of legislation this session, including the parity bill. ‘The last three sessions, the Senate has passed mental health parity,’ Panzer said. ‘We can pass it through the Senate again and have it die. I would like a bill passed that’s signed into law.’ Insurers and business groups oppose the bill because it would drive up premiums. The Wisconsin Insurance Commissioner estimated the increase at 32 cents to \$1.25 per month per enrollee. ‘I think I read somewhere that health insurance costs are high in this state,’ said Rep. Glenn Grothman, a Republican also from West Bend. ‘Why ... would we pass that?’” [Wisconsin State Journal, 03/03/2004]

2007: Vukmir Was Chair Of The Health And Healthcare Reform Committee, Where Three Mental Health Bills Died

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Vukmir Was Chair Of The Committee On Health And Healthcare Reform. [2007-2008 Wisconsin Blue Book, Accessed [09/19/2018](#)]

Vukmir Allowed Three Mental Health Bills To Die In The Committee On Health And Healthcare Reform

Vukmir Allowed An Assembly Bill Expanding Outpatient Treatment Options For Mental Health And Substance Abuse To Die In Committee

Assembly Bill 463 Was Introduced In The Assembly And Referred To The Committee On Health And Healthcare Reform. [[Assembly Bill 463](#), 2007 Wisconsin Assembly Journal 242, [07/19/2007](#)]

- **Assembly Bill 463 Never Made It Out Committee And Failed To Pass Pursuant To Senate Joint Resolution 1.** [[Assembly Bill 463](#), 2007 Wisconsin Assembly Journal 717, [03/21/2008](#)]
- **Assembly Bill 463 Lifted Restrictions On The Type Of Mental Health Professionals Who May Provide Outpatient Services For Mental Health And Substance Abuse Treatment.** “This bill requires group health insurance policies to cover the services of clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, and professional counselors for the outpatient treatment of nervous and mental disorders and alcoholism and other drug abuse problems. [...] This bill exempts certain MA mental health and AODA services from the requirement that, in order for reimbursement to the service provider, they first be prescribed by a physician. The bill also requires that licensed clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, and professional counselors (licensed mental health professionals) and psychologists be included as providers of MA-reimbursable psychotherapy and AODA services. Lastly, the bill establishes psychotherapy and AODA services by licensed mental health professionals and psychologists as an MA benefit and prohibits DHFS from requiring that licensed mental health professionals be supervised, prohibits DHFS from requiring that clinical psychotherapy or AODA services be provided under a certified program, and prohibits DHFS from requiring that a physician or other health care provider first prescribe the psychotherapy or AODA services before the professional or psychologist provides the services to an MA recipient.” [2007 Assembly Bill 463, [07/19/2007](#)]

The Committee On Health And Healthcare Reform Held A Public Hearing On Assembly Bill 463. [2007 Assembly Bill 463, Record of Committee Proceedings, [11/20/2007](#)]

Vukmir Allowed A Senate Bill Expanding Outpatient Treatment Options For Mental Health And Substance Abuse To Die In Committee Without A Public Hearing

Senate Bill 246 Was A Bipartisan Bill Introduced By Democrats And Republicans In The Senate Passed In The Senate. [[Senate Bill 246](#), 2007 Wisconsin Senate Journal 296, [07/25/2007](#)]

- **Senate Bill 246 Passed The Senate, No Vote Was Recorded.** [[Senate Bill 246](#), 2008 Wisconsin Senate Journal 652, [03/04/2008](#)]
- **Senate Bill 246 Was Messaged To The Assembly And Referred To The Committee On Health And Healthcare Reform.** [[Senate Bill 246](#), 2008 Wisconsin Assembly Journal 700, [03/13/2008](#)]
- **Senate Bill 246 Never Made It Out Of Committee And Failed To Pass Pursuant To Senate Joint Resolution 1.** [[Senate Bill 246](#), 2008 Wisconsin Assembly Journal 700, [03/13/2008](#)]
- **Senate Bill 246 Lifted Restrictions On The Type Of Mental Health Professionals Who May Provide Outpatient Services For Mental Health And Substance Abuse Treatment.** “This bill requires group health insurance policies to cover the services of clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, and professional counselors for the outpatient treatment of nervous and mental disorders and alcoholism and other drug abuse problems. [...] This bill exempts certain MA mental health and AODA services from the requirement that, in order for reimbursement to the service provider, they first be prescribed by a physician. The bill also requires that licensed clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, and professional counselors (licensed mental health professionals) and psychologists be included as providers of MA-reimbursable psychotherapy and AODA services. Lastly, the bill establishes psychotherapy and AODA services by licensed mental health professionals and psychologists as an MA benefit and prohibits DHFS from requiring that licensed mental health professionals be supervised, prohibits DHFS from requiring that clinical psychotherapy or AODA services be provided under a certified program, and prohibits DHFS from requiring that a physician or other health care provider first prescribe the psychotherapy or AODA services before the professional or psychologist provides the services to an MA recipient.” [2007 Senate Bill 246, [07/25/2007](#)]

The Committee On Health And Healthcare Reform Did Not Hold A Public Hearing On Senate Bill 246. [Record of Committee Proceedings, Accessed [09/19/2018](#)]

Vukmir Allowed An Assembly Bill Requiring Mental Health Parity For Insurance Coverage To Die In Committee Without A Public Hearing

Assembly Bill 922 Was Introduced And Referred To The Committee On Health And Healthcare Reform. [[Assembly Bill 922](#), 2008 Wisconsin Assembly Journal 642, 03/11/2008]

- **Assembly Bill 922 Never Made It Out Of Committee And Failed To Pass Pursuant To Senate Joint Resolution 1.** [[Assembly Bill 922](#), 2008 Wisconsin Assembly Journal 717, [03/21/2008](#)]
- **Assembly Bill 922 Required That “Coverage Under Group Health Benefit Plans And Governmental Self-Insured Health Plans For The Treatment Of Mental Health And Substance Abuse Problems Must Be The Same As The Coverage Under Those Plans For**

The Treatment Of Physical Conditions.” “This bill removes the specified minimum amounts of coverage that a group health insurance policy must provide for the treatment of mental health and substance abuse problems but retains the requirements with respect to providing the coverage. Except for group plans providing limited benefits, the bill specifically applies the requirements to all types of group health benefit plans, including defined network plans, insurance plans offered by the state, and self-insured health plans of the state and municipalities. In addition, the bill requires group and individual health benefit plans and governmental self-insured plans that provide coverage for the treatment of mental health and substance abuse problems and that would cover at least one annual physical examination to cover at least one annual screening for a covered individual to determine the need for treatment of mental health and substance abuse problems and for a female covered under the plan at least one screening during a pregnancy for prepartum depression and at least one screening within six months after a live birth, stillbirth, or miscarriage for postpartum depression to determine the need for treatment. The bill also imposes a new requirement that the coverage under group health benefit plans and governmental self-insured health plans for the treatment of mental health and substance abuse problems must be the same as the coverage under those plans for the treatment of physical conditions. This requirement for equal coverage applies to such coverage components as deductibles, copayments, annual and lifetime limits, and medical necessity definitions.” [2007 Assembly Bill 922, [03/11/2008](#)]

The Committee On Health And Healthcare Reform Did Not Hold A Public Hearing On Assembly Bill 922. [Record of Committee Proceedings, Accessed [09/19/2018](#)]

2010: Vukmir Opposed The Mental Health Parity Act

2010: Leah Vukmir Opposed Senate Bill 362, Which Was Signed Into Law As The Mental Health Parity Act

Vukmir Opposed Legislation That Required Insurers Treat Mental Illness The Same As Other Forms Of Disease

Vukmir Fought Against The Mental Health Parity Act, A Measure Which “Requires That Insurers Treat Mental Illness The Same As Other Forms Of Disease.” “As a state representative, Vukmir became known for fighting well-intentioned but, she felt, unwise health care proposals such as Healthy Wisconsin and the Mental Health Parity Act, which now requires that insurers treat mental illness the same as other forms of disease.” [Wisconsin Magazine, [9/22/2016](#)]

Vukmir Voted Against A Bill That Required Insurers Treat Mental Illness The Same As Other Forms Of Disease. [[Senate Bill 362](#), 2010 Wisconsin Assembly Journal 843, [04/15/2010](#)]

- **Vukmir Was One Of 40 Representatives To Vote Against Senate Bill 362.** [[Senate Bill 362](#), 2010 Wisconsin Assembly Journal 843, [04/15/2010](#)]
 - **57 Representatives Supported Senate Bill 362.** [[Senate Bill 362](#), 2010 Wisconsin Assembly Journal 843, [04/15/2010](#)]
- **Senate Bill 362 Was Passed By The Wisconsin Legislature And Signed Into Law As 2009 Wisconsin Act 218, The Mental Health Parity Act.** [[Wisconsin Act 218](#), 2010 Wisconsin Senate Journal 784, [05/03/2010](#)]

Vukmir Voted Against The Assembly Companion Bill In The Committee On Health And HealthCare Reform. [Assembly Bill 512, 2010 Wisconsin Assembly Journal 706, [02/26/2010](#)]

- **Vukmir Was One Of Five Committee Members To Vote Against Assembly Bill 512.** [[Assembly Bill 512](#), 2010 Wisconsin Assembly Journal 706, [02/26/2010](#)]
- **Eight Committee Members Voted For Assembly Bill 512.** [[Assembly Bill 512](#), 2010 Wisconsin Assembly Journal 706, [02/26/2010](#)]
- **Assembly Bill 512 Was Laid On The Table And Failed To Pass Pursuant To Senate Joint Resolution One.** [[Assembly Bill 512](#), 2010 Wisconsin Assembly Journal 970, [04/28/2010](#)]

Senate Bill 362 Required That Treatment For Mental Health Or Substance Abuse Problems “May Not Be More Restrictive” Than Other Treatment Limitations Under Insurance Plans

Senate Bill 362 Required Mental Health Parity In Insurance Coverage

Senate Bill 362 Required That Treatment For Mental Health Or Substance Abuse Problems “May Not Be More Restrictive” Than Other Treatment Limitations Under Insurance Plans. “The bill requires that deductibles, copayments, out-of-pocket limits, limitations regarding referrals to nonphysicians, and other treatment limitations under a group health benefit plan or a governmental self-insured health plan, or under an individual health benefit plan that provides coverage of treatment for mental health or substance abuse problems, may not be more restrictive with respect to that coverage than the most common or frequent type of treatment limitations that apply to substantially all other coverage under the plan. The bill also requires that expenses incurred for the treatment of mental health and substance abuse problems be included in any overall deductible amount, annual or lifetime limit, or out-of-pocket limit under the plan.” [2009 Senate Bill 362, [10/23/2009](#)]

Wisconsin State Journal: Under Senate Bill 362 “Essentially, Coverage For Mental Illness And Substance Abuse Couldn’t Be More Restrictive Or Expensive Than The Plan’s Medical And Surgical Coverage.” “Gov. Jim Doyle signed into law a proposal that makes changes to insurance coverage for the mentally ill and drug addicts. The law he signed Thursday doesn’t mandate coverage, but all group health plans that offer such coverage would have to provide it at what’s known as parity. Essentially, coverage for mental illness and substance abuse couldn’t be more restrictive or expensive than the plan’s medical and surgical coverage. Employers that provide health coverage for workers could choose not to follow the parity standards if their costs exceed certain levels. Employers with fewer than 10 eligible employees also could choose not to abide by the standards.” [Wisconsin State Journal, 04/30/2010]

Senate Bill 362 Closed Gaps In The 2009 Federal Law That Required Mental Health Parity In Insurance Coverage

Oshkosh Northwestern: Senate Bill 362 Worked To “Expand A 2009 Federal Parity Law Requiring Most Group Health Insurance Plans To Bolster Coverage For The Mentally Ill And Substance Abusers.” “A newly enacted state law is expected to expand a 2009 federal parity law requiring most group health insurance plans to bolster coverage for the mentally ill and substance abusers. Wisconsin Parity Act enacted in December 2010 requires qualifying group health plans for businesses with 10 or more employees to offer coverage for the mentally ill and substance abusers equal to coverage offered for traditional medical and surgical care, including mandating access to physicians. The federal Wellstone-Domenici Mental Health Parity Act of 2009 requires businesses with 50 or more employees to offer the same level of coverage for mental health as they offer for physical health. Businesses experiencing an increase in health insurance premiums of more than 2 percent due to the expanded coverage can opt out.” [Oshkosh Northwestern, 01/23/2011]

Green Bay Press-Gazette: Senate Bill 362 “Would Close Some Of The Gaps In The Federal Law.” “Significant challenges remain to erasing the stigmas associated with mental illnesses and ensuring that

everyone who needs treatment gets it, according to a panel of experts who spoke Friday. Advocates hosted a symposium Friday at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College in Green Bay, part of a larger series of events around the state. They hope to gather information about what works in mental health care, as well as what needs to be fixed, and plan to present a final report to the state. 'We know so much more now, yet we've continued coverage of mental illness as if they are moral weaknesses or character flaws,' said state Rep. Sandy Pasch, D-Whitefish Bay, who is a co-sponsor of a bill to increase parity for mental illness in Wisconsin. Federal law recently required group health insurance plans that cover more than 50 employees and offer mental health care to offer parity in care, eliminating the financial limits previously placed on treating mental health. Although the law applies to some Medicaid, local and state programs, it doesn't include individual plans, Medicare or group plans with 50 or fewer employees. Legislation introduced in the Wisconsin Legislature by Pasch and state Sen. Dave Hansen, D-Green Bay, would close some of the gaps in the federal law. It would require parity in treatment for mental health for employers with 10 to 50 employees. Pasch, who was a psychiatric nurse before being elected to office, said she hopes the bill will be passed by the end of next month." [Green Bay Press-Gazette, 01/16/2010]

The Capital Times: "Advocates For Parity Estimate That Loopholes In The Federal Law Leave At Least 700,000 People In The State Unprotected." "La Crosse's ability to dodge parity laws may be short-lived, however, if a bill in the Legislature that would require most Wisconsin employers, including local governments, to provide mental health parity passes this spring. Wisconsin is one of only seven states that lack this sort of state parity law, according to the American Psychological Association. Advocates for parity estimate that loopholes in the federal law leave at least 700,000 people in the state unprotected. Businesses are fighting the measure, claiming it will increase already exorbitant health insurance costs, but supporters think it has a good shot at passage in the Democratic-controlled Legislature. Until then, the new federal law is the main parity measure on the books in Wisconsin, and news that a local city government has joined Woodman's in choosing not to follow it dismays local advocates. They worry others may soon follow suit. 'That would be a catastrophe,' says Greer of the Mental Health Center of Dane County. Waiting lists at his center, which serves many without adequate private health insurance, Greer says, are already up to six months long. The loopholes in the law are the result of politics, say Greer and other longtime activists familiar with the decades of battle it took to make mental health parity federal law." [The Capital Times, 01/19/2010]

Mental Health Parity Act Received Bipartisan Support

Five Republican Representatives Voted For The Passage Of Senate Bill 362

Five Republican Representatives Voted For The Passage Of Senate Bill 362. [[Senate Bill 362](#), 2010 Wisconsin Assembly Journal 843, [04/15/2010](#)]

Former Republican State Senate Majority Leader Mary Panzer Supported Mental Health Parity

Former Republican State Senate Majority Leader Mary Panzer: "When You Look At The Costs That Society Pays, That The Taxpayer Pays, By Not Covering These Illnesses, It's Huge." "But not all Republicans fought against mental health parity. For example, former Republican state Senate Majority Leader Mary Panzer is a longtime mental health parity advocate because, as she told the Shepherd in an interview when the Legislature was debating the issue, 'When you look at the costs that society pays, that the taxpayer pays, by not covering these illnesses, it's huge.' Forcing those with a mental illness into a public-pay program like Medicaid doesn't save money, either, because Medicaid reimburses at a very low rate. 'It is a pass-through on everybody else's hospital bills, clinic bills and doctor's bills,' Panzer explained." [Shepherd Express, [09/29/2010](#)]

Health Care Stakeholders Supported The Mental Health Parity Act

Representatives From Mental Health, Disabilities, And Health Care Groups Supported The Mental Health Parity Act

Appearances For

- Dave Hansen — Sen.
- Sandy Pasch — Rep.
- Barbara Lawton — Lt.Gov
- Pete Carlson — Aurora Health Care
- Shel Gross — Mental Health America of WI
- Richard Brown, Madison
- Christopher Sigl, Hartford — NAMI
- Brenda Ward — NASW WI Chapter
- Marc Herstand — NASW WI Chapter
- Ken Robbins — Dr., WI Psychiatric Association
- Sandy Bernier, North Fond du Lac
- Joanne Grassman
- David Riemer, Milwaukee — Community Advocates
- Mark Fossie, Milwaukee — M and S Clinical Services
- Sarah Bowen, Madison — WI Psychological Association
- Dianne Greenley — Disability Rights Wisconsin
- Kent Lovern — Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office

Registrations For

- Alice O'Connor — WI Psychiatric Association
- H, Bruce Kruger, Milwaukee
- Neal Blackburn, Lancaster — WI County Human Service Association
- Sarah Diedrick-Kasdorf — WI Counties Association
- Joanne Ricca, Milwaukee — WI State AFL-CIO
- John Grabel — AFSCME
- Gina Dennick-Champion — WI Nurses Association
- Sabrina Gentile — WI Council on Children and Families
- Leslie Osman, Madison
- Kimberly Wadas — WI Catholic Conference
- Mickey Biel — Dane County
- Chris Rasch — WI Medical Society
- Tom Petri — WI Primary Healthcare Association
- Aaron Winden — NAMI Waukesha, Inc.

[Wisconsin State Legislature, Record of Committee Proceedings, [11/10/2009](#)]

Thirty-Six Health Care Stakeholders Lobbied In Support Of Senate Bill 362

Thirty-Six Health Care Stakeholders Lobbied In Support Of Senate Bill 362

Thirty-Six Different Health Care Stakeholders Lobbied In Support Of Senate Bill 362:

- **AFSCME Council 11**
- **AFSCME International**
- **American Civil Liberties Union Of Wisconsin Inc.**
- **Aurora Health Care Inc.**
- **Brown County**
- **Coalition Of Wisconsin Aging Groups Inc**
- **Community Advocates Inc.**
- **Dane County**
- **League Of Women Voters Of Wisconsin Inc.**
- **Marshfield Clinic**
- **Medical College Of Wisconsin**
- **Mental Health Association In Milwaukee County**

- Ministry Health Care
- National Association Of Social Workers- Wisconsin Chapter
- Outagamie County Board Of Supervisors
- Pfizer Inc.
- ThedaCare
- United Transportation Union
- Wisconsin Association Of Family And Children's Agencies
- Wisconsin Association Of Local Health Departments And Boards
- Wisconsin Association On Alcohol And Other Drug Abuse Inc.
- Wisconsin Catholic Conference
- Wisconsin Citizen Action
- Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Wisconsin Coalition For Advocacy
- Wisconsin Council Of Churches
- Wisconsin Council On Children And Families
- Wisconsin Counties Association
- Wisconsin Medical Society
- Wisconsin Nurses Association
- Wisconsin Occupational Therapy Association
- Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association
- Wisconsin Psychiatric Association
- Wisconsin Psychological Association
- Wisconsin Public Health Association
- Wisconsin State AFL-CIO

[Wisconsin Ethics Commission, Eye on Lobbying, Accessed [09/17/2018](#)]

Nine Health Care Stakeholders Submitted Letters In Support Of Senate Bill 362 To The Committee On Health, Health Insurance, Privacy, Property Tax Relief, And Revenue Public Hearing Committee Record

Aurora Health Care Supported Senate Bill 362

Aurora Health Care: "Behavioral Health Services Are A Critical, Core Component Of Health Care."

"My name is Pete Carlson, and I serve as the Vice President of Behavioral Health Services, Aurora Health Care and in that role also serve as the Chief Administrative Officer of Aurora Psychiatric Hospital, the oldest private psychiatric hospital in the state of Wisconsin, celebrating our 125th anniversary this year. I want to share our unique perspective with you today, because that has provided mental health benefits at parity with physical health benefits for our employees since 2002. We have experienced this issue thoroughly from both perspectives. Aurora Behavioral Health Services is the largest private provider of behavioral health services in the State of Wisconsin [...] We believe that behavioral health services are a critical, core component of health care. Wisconsin is recognized as a leader nationwide for quality and access to affordable healthcare. Senate Bill 362 continues that tradition." [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 17, [11/10/2009](#)]

Disability Rights Wisconsin Supported Senate Bill 362

Disability Rights Wisconsin: Senate Bill 362 Is "Good For Wisconsin's Health Care System, Counties, Criminal Justice System, And Child Welfare System." "Disability Rights Wisconsin strongly urges your support of Senate Bill 362 which will bring parity in treatment for mental health and substance abuse disorders to all Wisconsin citizens who have health insurance. This bill will fill in the gaps created by the federal parity legislation and provide coverage to over 700,000 individuals in small group plans and who have individual insurance that offers mental health and substance abuse benefits. It makes no sense to have parity for some Wisconsin citizens but not others. This bill will address this problem. Insurance

coverage for treatment of mental illness and substance abuse is clearly beneficial for individuals with these conditions. However, it is also good for Wisconsin's health care system, counties, criminal justice system, and child welfare system." [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 22, [11/10/2009](#)]

The Community Advocates Public Policy Institute And The Milwaukee Addiction Treatment Initiative Supported Senate Bill 362

Director Of The Community Advocates Public Policy Institute And The Milwaukee Addiction Treatment Initiative: Senate Bill 362 "Will Help To Save Lives And Lower Costs." "I am Director of the Community Advocates Public Policy Institute and the Milwaukee Addiction Treatment Initiative (MATI). MATI is a collaboration of more than 80 state and local organizations working to expand access to drug and alcohol treatment for everyone in Wisconsin who needs it. The MATI coalition includes law enforcement agencies—our champion is Milwaukee County District Attorney John Chisholm—as well as public and private health organizations, addiction treatment providers, advocates, and many other local and state organizations. We share the common goal of closing the addiction treatment gap. The bill you consider today, SB-263, is much-needed legislation. It will increase mental health and addiction treatment for hundreds of thousands of people in Wisconsin. It will help to save lives and lower costs. I urge you to approve the Wisconsin Mental Health and Substance Abuse Parity Act. [...] The Community Advocates Public Policy Institute and the Milwaukee Addiction Treatment Initiative strongly support this legislation." [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 29, [11/10/2009](#)]

Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force Supported Senate Bill 362

Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force: Senate Bill 362 Would "Ensure That Wisconsin Residents Have Improved Access To This Essential Medical Care" And "Help End Discrimination Against People Experiencing Mental Health Concerns." "The Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force strongly supports the Wisconsin Mental Health and Substance Abuse Parity Act, SB-362/AB512. Mental illness affects one in five Americans, adults and children alike. Coverage for mental health services has been very limited under most private insurance plans and government programs and far more restrictive than the coverage provided for treatment of other illnesses. These inequities in the insurance statutes prevent many people with mental illness and substance abuse disorders from receiving medically necessary treatment. The long-term consequences of these untreated disorders are costly, in both human and fiscal terms. [...] The Wisconsin Mental Health and Substance Abuse Parity Act will ensure that coverage for medically necessary treatment of all mental health and substance abuse disorders is no more restrictive than the coverage for other medical conditions. Please pass this bill now to ensure that Wisconsin residents have improved access to this essential medical care and to help end discrimination against people experiencing mental health concerns." [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 32, [11/10/2009](#)]

- **The Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force Had Over 60 Member Organizations.** "The Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force provides a forum where different sectors of the mental health delivery system come together to address and resolve issues of interest to all people affected by mental illness. The task force has over 60 member organizations (see next page) including consumer groups, advocacy organizations, providers, law enforcement, and other community stakeholders." [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 32, [11/10/2009](#)]

The Wisconsin Catholic Conference Supported Senate Bill 362

Wisconsin Catholic Conference: "Establishing Parity Coverage For Those Who Suffer From Substance Abuse, Mental Health Issues, And Physical Illness, Recognizes The Fullness Of The Human Person And Fosters A Consistent Life Ethic." "On behalf of the Wisconsin Catholic Conference, the public policy voice of Wisconsin's Roman Catholic bishops, I wish to express our support for Senate Bill 362. This bill would enhance health insurance coverage requirements in Wisconsin for

mental illness and substance abuse, ensuring that those who work for businesses with 50 or fewer employees or who suffer from these conditions receive the same care and treatment as those who have physical health issues. SB 362 proposes a sensible policy that reflects medical science's current understanding of the intricate link between mental and physical health. Mental health conditions and substance abuse can be as debilitating as any physical injury, and yet, those who suffer such afflictions have traditionally not received the same opportunity to access treatment. [...] Proper treatment of mental health and substance abuse not only serves the human dignity of the individual afflicted with a condition or addiction; it also serves to enhance the safety and security of our communities. Indeed, one of the issues that continually surfaced as the bishops studied the issue of crime and the criminal justice system in this state was the percentage of prisoners with mental illness and addictions. Mental illness and substance abuse issues also clearly intertwine with other social concerns such as poverty. Establishing parity coverage for those who suffer from substance abuse, mental health issues, and physical illness, recognizes the fullness of the human person and fosters a consistent life ethic. These are worthy policy objectives." [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 39, [11/10/2009](#)]

The Wisconsin Nurses Association Supported Senate Bill 362

Wisconsin Nurses Association: "SB 362 Is Good For The Employee, Good For The Employer And Good For Wisconsin's Economy." "Thank you for allowing the Wisconsin Nurses Association (WNA) to submit testimony on SB 362 which further supports increase health insurance coverage of nervous and mental health disorders, alcoholism and other drug abuse problems. WNA serves as the voice for professional registered nurses in Wisconsin. WNA has long recognized and supported the need for health insurance parity coverage for treatment of mental health and substance abuse. This is why we support SB 362. We know the benefits of such policies as equal coverage for drug and alcohol treatment requires health insurers to recognize addictions as a disease and provide coverage for treating alcohol and drug addiction that is equal to treatment coverage for other chronic, relapsing disorders such as diabetes and hypertension. [...] This legislation benefits the individual employee and the small business because the treatment can be readily available thus supporting employee productivity and reducing employee turnover. This is why WNA believes that SB 362 is good for the employee, good for the employer and good for Wisconsin's economy." [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 42, [11/10/2009](#)]

Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association Supported Senate Bill 362

Director Of Policy And Communications For The Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association: "WPHCA Believes Expanding The Federal Law's Requirements To All Employer Group Plans That Offer Mental Health And Substance Abuse Coverage Will Help Hundreds, If Not Thousands Of Our Patients." "I'm Tom Petri, Director of Policy and Communications for the Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association. I'm here today, on behalf of our providers and patients, over ¾ of who are completely uninsured or are covered solely through the Medicaid/Medicare Program/ WPHCA members support SB 362, and we encourage committee members to vote in favor of it because we understand the connection between quality mental and physical health, especially among low-income or poverty-stricken individuals. [...] Ultimately, WPHCA believes expanding the federal law's requirements to all employer group plans that offer mental health and substance abuse coverage will help hundreds, if not thousands of our patients who have successfully gained physical health coverage through their jobs but do not yet have mental health services coverage as part of their plans." [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 45, [11/10/2009](#)]

The Medical Society of Milwaukee County Supported Senate Bill 362

Executive Vice President Of The Medical Society Of Milwaukee County: "It Is Time That We Recognize The Inequity That Exists For Insured Individuals Who Have Coverage For Medical Conditions But Limited To No Coverage For Significant Underlying Mental Health Conditions." "I am Bruce Kruger, Executive Vice President of the Medical Society of Milwaukee County (MSMC), an organization established for over 165 years and representing over 3,000 practicing physicians, residents

and medical students. [...] The inability, however, for patients to obtain psychotherapy, medication consultation by a psychiatrist, intensity of treatment, and treatment consistent with evidence-based guidelines, does not optimize clinical outcomes and can result in increased hospitalizations, costs, and sub optimal quality of life. We appreciate Representative Pasch and Senator Hansen introducing this important legislation and strongly urge the committee to support the bill. MSMC believes that this legislation, if passed, will provide access and support to primary care physicians who are challenged by increased demand for services, dwindling interest in increasing manpower, and unable to obtain necessary consultative and management due to insurance benefit limitations. It is time that we recognize the inequity that exists for insured individuals who have coverage for medical conditions but limited to no coverage for significant underlying mental health conditions. This bill will level the playing field!" [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 6, [11/10/2009](#)]

The Wisconsin Chapter Of The National Association of Social Workers Supported Senate Bill 362

The National Association Of Social Workers: "This Bill Would Close The Gap In Coverage In Wisconsin That Results From The National Wellstone Dominici Mental Health/Substance Abuse Parity Bill." "The National Association of Social Workers, Wisconsin Chapter, strongly supports Senate Bill 362. This bill would close the gap in coverage in Wisconsin that results from the national Wellstone Dominici Mental health/substance abuse parity bill. Senate Bill 362 would ensure that employees of small as well as large employers will be covered equally for mental health and substance abuse conditions. [...] The New Day Coalition has been working to pass full mental health and substance abuse parity in Wisconsin for over ten years. One of the biggest concerns raised over the years by opponents of this bill has been regarding possible increases in premiums. After ten years of working on this bill we now have a wealth of information from states that have implemented full mental health and substance abuse parity, as well as from the federal government and private industry that show the implementation of full mental health and substance abuse parity, at worst results in a 1% increase in premiums." [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 11, [11/10/2009](#)]

Business Advocacy Groups Opposed The Mental Health Parity Act

Representatives From Business Advocacy Groups Opposed The Mental Health Parity Act

Registrations Against

- David Storrey, Madison — Wisconsin Retail Association
- R.J. Pirlot — WI Manufacturers and Commerce
- Bill Smith — NFIB
- Steve Baas, Milwaukee — MMAC

[Wisconsin State Legislature, Record of Committee Proceedings, [11/10/2009](#)]

Four Business Advocacy Groups Lobbied Against Senate Bill 362

Four Different Business Advocacy Groups Lobbied Against Senate Bill 362

Four Different Business Advocacy Groups Lobbied Against Senate Bill 362:

- **Green Bay Area Chamber Of Commerce**
- **League Of Wisconsin Municipalities**
- **Metropolitan Milwaukee Association Of Commerce**
- **Wisconsin Manufacturers And Commerce**

[Wisconsin Ethics Commission, Eye on Lobbying, Accessed [09/17/2018](#)]

One Business Advocacy Group Submitted A Letter Opposing Senate Bill 362 To The Committee On Health, Health Insurance, Privacy, Property Tax Relief, And Revenue Public Hearing Committee Record

Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce Opposed Senate Bill 362

Wisconsin Manufacturers And Commerce: “Government Insurance Mandates Inevitably Lead To Higher Health Care Insurance Costs.” “Government insurance mandates inevitably lead to higher health care insurance costs, meaning employers and employees will have to pay more for health insurance coverage. [...] In conclusion, I respectfully urge you to oppose SB 362. At the very least, I urge you to delay action on SB 362 until (1) we know how much mandates already enacted, this session, will increase Wisconsin insurance premiums and (2) how much OCI concludes SB 362 will increase Wisconsin insurance premiums.” [Wisconsin State Legislature Public Hearing Committee Records, Page 48, [11/10/2009](#)]