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### **Kolste Introduces Legislation to End Surprise Medical Bills**

MADISON – Rep. Debra Kolste introduced legislation recently to protect consumers from receiving unexpected medical bills. Surprise medical bills often occur when a patient receives care from an out-of-network health care provider at an in-network facility.

The patient has no knowledge that this provider is not in their insurance network until they receive a bill for their services. This is especially prevalent in emergency medical situations where the patient has no opportunity to select their providers.

“The financial impact of these surprise medical bills are often devastating to Wisconsin families,” said Rep. Kolste. “During a medical emergency, the last thing families should be worried about is whether or not their healthcare will be covered by their insurance,” Kolste added.

Assembly Bill (AB) 329 would require providers to disclose to patients that they are outside of their insurance network, as well as provide a good-faith estimate of the cost of services the patient may be responsible for paying. AB 329 also specifies that when patients receive emergency medical care from an out-of-network provider, their insurer and the provider may not require them to pay more than they would have paid had the provider been in-network.

“This legislation will ensure that Wisconsinites are not in the dark when it comes to the pricing of their healthcare,” remarked Rep. Kolste. “You should not be surprised with a crippling medical bill, especially when you are receiving care at a clinic or hospital that you know is part of your insurance network.”

Twenty-five other states have passed laws that regulate surprise medical bills. AB 329 was referred to the Assembly Committee on Health and the Senate Committee on Insurance, Financial Services, Government Oversight and Courts.