

Area politicians weigh in on health care reform decision

Within minutes of the announcement that the Supreme Court ruled to uphold the individual insurance requirement at the heart of President Barack Obama's health care reform law, reactions from area politicians started to roll in. Here is a collection of statements issued by legislators and political figures with ties to the Oshkosh area and to Wisconsin. We will continue to update this story as we receive more responses.

U.S. Rep. Tom Petri, R-Wis.

"I am very disappointed by the Supreme Court's decision to uphold the constitutionality of President Obama's health care law. Just because it may be considered constitutional does not mean it is the right thing to do.

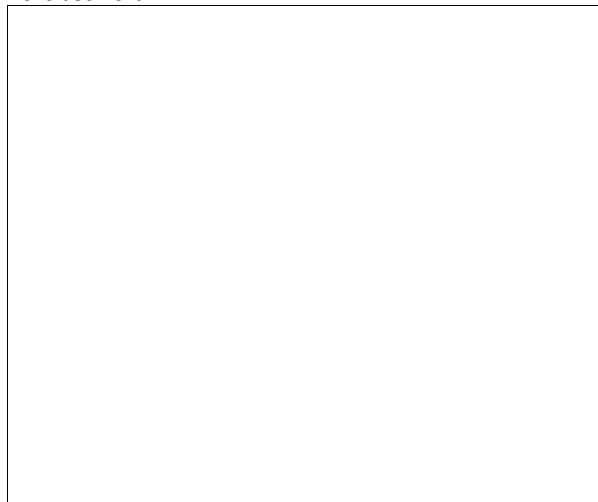
"The law is a significant overreach on the part of Congress and takes a fundamentally wrong approach to achieving the goal of making affordable coverage available to all Americans. I am pleased, however, that the American people will have an opportunity to make their voice heard on this subject later this year.

"I support health care reform which ensures

that all Americans, including those with pre-existing conditions, have access to affordable coverage. However, I believe the health care law is flawed in its approach to achieving that goal and will only make worse our skyrocketing health care costs and federal deficits. A study last month found that the cost of healthcare services is expected to rise 7.5 percent in 2013, which is more than three times the expected rates of inflation and economic growth.

"I am also very concerned about the law's negative effects on job creation. I have met with hundreds of employers in my district and hear constantly how the mandates and uncertainty created by the law are discouraging hiring. A report issued by the investment research firm UBS last September said that the health care law was, 'arguably the biggest impediment to hiring.' For these reasons, I voted in favor of repealing the law last year and have also been supportive of efforts to defund the implementation of the law.

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"We need the right reforms to eliminate waste throughout the system and reward high quality, low-cost care. We should be choosing approaches which give consumers incentives to use their health care dollars wisely. Instead, we are going in the opposite direction by turning decisions over to the government. Instead of getting everybody into the old, dysfunctional system and then figuring out how to pay for it, we should reform the current delivery system by emphasizing advances in efficiency so that more people will be able to afford their health care, and the government will be better able to take care of the rest.

"Given the Court's ruling, I will continue to work with my colleagues to replace the President's health care law with real reforms to ensure every American has access to affordable health care."

State Rep. Gordon Hintz, D-Oshkosh

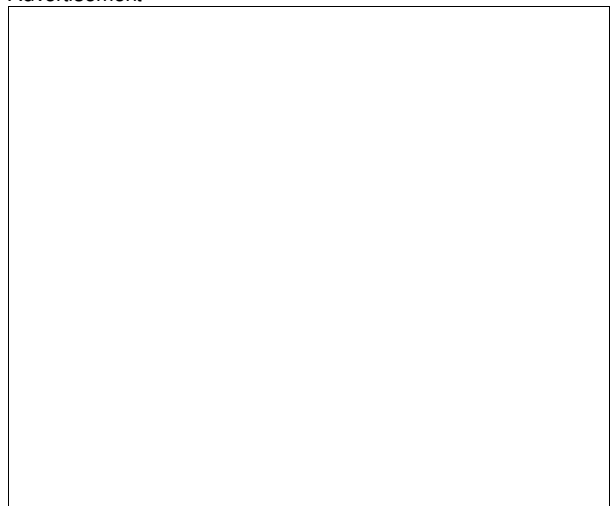
"I am pleased that the Supreme Court has determined that Congress acted within its constitutional powers when enacting the health care reform bill.

"Under the PPACA, nearly three million young adults nationwide can receive coverage under their parents' insurance plan, children with pre-existing conditions cannot be denied insurance coverage, those who become sick can no longer have their benefits discontinued, and 46,000 Wisconsin seniors are paying less for prescription drugs.

"This ruling assures our country can move forward in addressing the runaway insurance costs that are overwhelming our economy and the finances of Wisconsin's families. One of the ways the PPACA will address rising costs is by requiring insurance companies to spend 80% of premium dollars on actual medical care instead of padding their profits and agent commissions.

"I am hopeful that this ruling will prompt Governor Walker to immediately reverse his irresponsible decision to stand in the way of implementation of health care reform legislation, including his failure to set up Wisconsin's health care exchange as required under federal law and his decision to return a \$38 million grant to fund the creation of Wisconsin's health exchange system. Numerous business leaders and insurance agents have expressed frustration that Wisconsin would risk turning over regulation of the state's insurance market to Washington to make a political point against a health insurance law.

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"In the past, the Governor and Republicans seem to have been more interested in playing politics than in best serving the interests of Wisconsin residents and being good stewards of our tax dollars. Now that the law has been upheld, it is my hope we can put our differences aside and work together to ensure Wisconsin is on the forefront of benefiting from this landmark legislation."

**Republican National Committee
Chairman and ex-Wisconsin
GOP Chair Reince Priebus**

"Today's Supreme Court decision sets the stakes for the November election. Now, the only way to save the country from ObamaCare's budget-busting government takeover of health care is to elect a new president.

"Under President Obama's signature legislation, health care costs continue to skyrocket, and up to 20 million Americans could lose their employer-based coverage. A panel of unelected bureaucrats now has the unprecedented authority to come between elderly patients and their doctors. Meanwhile, the rules and regulations placed on job creators and small **businesses** make it nearly impossible to hire new workers at a time when Americans desperately need jobs.

"We need market-based solutions that give patients more choice, not less. The answer to rising health care costs is not, and will never be, Big Government.

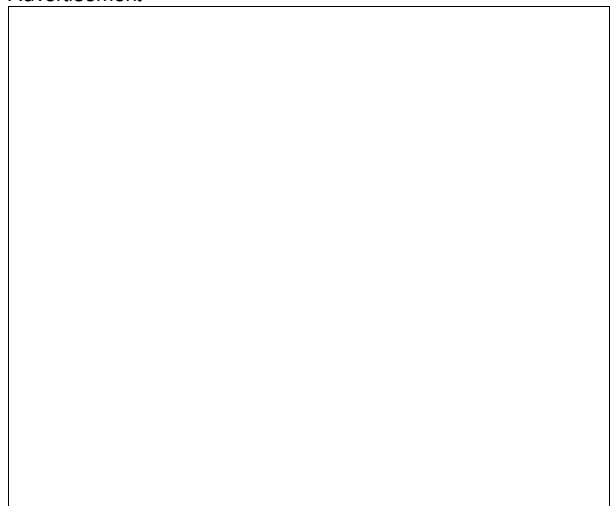
"We must elect a president who

understands the economy, respects free enterprise, and can provide the leadership we now so desperately need. On Election Day, we must elect Mitt Romney and put America on the path toward a brighter economic future and successful health care reform."

U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Wis.

"Today's Obamacare decision establishes that there is no area of Americans' private lives that is off limits to federal intrusion and control. Freedom took a real body blow. It is now up to Congress – and hopefully a new President – to repeal this unpopular monstrosity and replace it with free market reforms that will actually improve the quality and restrain the **cost** of health care in America."

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