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Lawmakers Circulate State-Level Hospital Price Transparency Legislation

WHA releases data showing Wisconsin hospitals already ranked no. 1 nationally for price transparency

Despite Wisconsin hospitals ranking best in the nation for price transparency, a group of four lawmakers including Sen. Bradley (R-New Berlin), Sen. Felzkowski (R-Tomahawk), Rep. Wittke (R-Caledonia) and Rep. Donovan (R-Greenfield) circulated legislation on June 5 to create state-level, hospital-only price transparency regulations, while ignoring federal price transparency requirements for health insurance companies and third-party administrators.

During a press conference to introduce the legislation, authors incorrectly claimed that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) were “not enforcing” federal hospital price transparency regulations. Proponents of the previously failed state legislation, which targets only hospitals, have also argued that Wisconsin hospitals are ignoring federal regulations, paying fines and walking away from federal regulations. WHA developed its *Truth on Transparency* campaign to combat these false claims and provide credible information to lawmakers.

In response to the release of this legislation, WHA sent a memo to members of the Legislature correcting these false claims, reminding lawmakers that no Wisconsin hospital has been fined for noncompliance and asking state lawmakers to oppose the legislation.

“Wisconsin hospitals and CMS have done far more to advance price transparency in the last year alone than the handful of groups in Wisconsin that will be echoing the tired call to do ‘more on hospital price transparency,’ while conspicuously ignoring compliance with federal price transparency requirements for health insurers, TPAs and other middlemen,” stated WHA in their June 5 memo to the Legislature.

The bill circulated last week among lawmakers for co-sponsorship would create state regulations related to hospital price transparency, when comprehensive federal regulations, being rigorously enforced by the Trump Administration, already exist.

Wisconsin’s hospitals are committed to compliance with federal price transparency regulations, yet data on enforcement and compliance by insurance companies and TPAs is nearly non-existent. Similar legislation introduced in May 2023 (2023 Senate Bill 328) failed to pass the Legislature, due to strong objections from WHA, member hospitals and health systems along with the realization by state lawmakers that state-level transparency efforts should be focusing on insurance companies, not hospitals.

When the state bill was released last week, WHA Senior Vice President of Government Relations Kyle O’Brien said, “Advocates for state-level price transparency legislation continue to ignore the outstanding record Wisconsin hospitals hold in complying with federal price transparency regulations.” He continued, “Thankfully, most lawmakers have not ignored this reality. We are grateful to the many state lawmakers who recognize the hard work of hospitals and have come to their own realization that this legislation is truly a solution in search of a problem.”

Since Senate Bill 328 was introduced in May 2023, federal price transparency regulations have changed multiple times. In fact, only a few months ago, President Trump issued a new executive order on price transparency, with new directives to implement and enforce hospital and insurer price transparency regulations.

“State legislation based even loosely upon federal rules will become obsolete with the inevitable next federal rule change or update,” said WHA in its memo to the Legislature.

Wisconsin hospitals have long been national leaders on price transparency. Over two decades ago WHA launched PricePoint, which provides patients easy access to hospital charge information, estimates for professional fees and ancillary services. WHA encourages Wisconsin lawmakers to explore the WHA Price Finder tool or visit their local hospital website to learn how patients can access pricing information.

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EDUCATION EVENTS

Aug. 8, 2025

WHA Financial Workshop

Sep. 17, 2025

2025 Annual Wisconsin Organization of Nurse Leaders Conference

Jan. 28, 2026

2026 WHA Health Care Leadership Academy