



JIM DOYLE
GOVERNOR
STATE OF WISCONSIN

October 14, 2005

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY:

I am vetoing Assembly Bill 207. The bill expands the circumstances under which a health care provider may refuse to provide certain medical procedures based on moral or religious convictions. Current law already allows providers to refuse to perform sterilizations and abortions. The bill would also allow such an objection as a basis for not participating in procedures involving human embryos and fetal tissue or organs.

The bill is nearly identical to AB 67. I vetoed that bill in 2004 for the same reasons. This bill lets your doctor put his or her political beliefs ahead of your medical best interests. That is simply unconscionable. Medical decisions should be made by the patient and the doctor based on what's best for the patient, not on the doctor's political views.

This bill doesn't even require health care providers to give you a referral to someone else if they object to a particular treatment. In fact, the doctor wouldn't even have to tell you about a treatment option that might exist. Even if your life was threatened, this bill would allow a doctor to withhold lifesaving medical care.

The bill could also deny medical access to people in rural areas, who may have a very limited pool of doctors to choose from. It is hard enough for many people to get the health care they need, and this bill would make it even tougher.

Because it puts a doctor's political views ahead of the best interests of patients, this bill ought to be called the "unconscionable clause."

Respectfully submitted,

JIM DOYLE
Governor