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from the office of State Rep. Stephanie Kifowit

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Kifowit Sponsors Measure Expanding Preventive Care For In-Home Dialysis Patients

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – In an effort to expand healthcare access for critically ill and homebound patients, state Rep. Stephanie Kifowit, D-Oswego, is sponsoring legislation to expand insurance coverage for preventive care for in-home dialysis patients.

“The stress of being on dialysis or having a loved one in kidney failure is unimaginable,” Kifowit said. “Patients undergoing in-home dialysis already face severe health challenges and are unable to work. They often forego having a potential life-saving ultrasound imaging to detect infections because I am told that insurance companies do not cover the service and patients simply cannot afford the cost.”

Kifowit’s House Bill 4319 would require insurance companies that include in-home dialysis coverage to also pay for ultrasound screenings for patients. These screenings are necessary to check for infections in the kidneys and lungs. The three most common infections are peritonitis, tunnel infection and exit site infections, all which if left untreated, can be potentially fatal. Many times these infections do not produce outward symptoms, but can be detected through ultrasound imaging. In addition, ultrasound imaging can also provide early identification of lung congestion which may help prevent the progression of heart failure, serious cardiovascular problems and death in dialysis patients.

Kifowit filed this legislation after being contacted by an area resident, who lost her mother from an undiagnosed infection while she was on dialysis. The resident stated that the insurance company would not cover ultrasound imaging, which could have identified her infection and potentially could have saved her mother’s life.

“It is important to make sure individuals living with dialysis have access to all the services they need,” Kifowit said. “Ultrasound screenings are a valuable healthcare tool to identify infections and other complications before they cause more extensive damage or could be fatal. The right thing is for this service to be covered by insurance.”

House Bill 4319 was introduced on October 20 and awaits further consideration in the House. For more information, please contact Kifowit’s full-time constituent service office by calling [630-585-1308](tel:630-585-1308), by email at Stephanie.Kifowit@att.net, or by visiting www.ILDistrict84.com.