

On his way to Washington to begin his third term in Congress, Rep. Peter Welch announced a new strategy Tuesday to fight efforts to repeal the new health care reform law.

During a press roundtable at Burlington International Airport, Welch told reporters he was returning to Washington early to round up support for amendments he will propose that would allow all members of the House to vote up-or-down on signature provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

"It's time to get beyond the rhetoric of the election and recognize that repealing this law would hammer middle class families and bust the budget," Welch said. "Repeal would once again allow insurance companies to discriminate against those with preexisting conditions, impose lifetime limits on coverage, take away free preventive care for seniors and remove those under the age of 26 from their parents' health plans. Every member of the House should have to vote on each of these important provisions."

Welch, who will be sworn in to the 112th Congress on Wednesday, told reporters he will seek to find bipartisan solutions to creating jobs and reducing the deficit. But he said he plans to vigorously oppose any efforts to roll back the signature accomplishments of the 111th Congress, including health care reform, Wall Street reform, credit card consumer protections and increased student financial aid.

With Republicans poised to hold a vote on repealing health care reform next week, Welch will introduce four amendments to the repeal bill, which would protect the following provisions of the law:

- The elimination of lifetime limits on care
- Coverage of individuals up to age 26 on their parents' health care plans
- A ban on discrimination against those with preexisting conditions
- Free preventive care for seniors

Later Tuesday, Welch plans to speak at the year's first meeting of the Democratic Caucus to urge his colleagues to support his proposed amendments. As of Tuesday at noon, 30 House

members had signed on to the effort.