

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Baldwin, democratic senators call TrumpCare disastrous for battle against opioid crisis

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – With 91 Americans dying each day from an opioid overdose, Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) joined a group of 21 senators, led by Senator Edward J. Markey (D-MA), today in sending a letter to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), calling on him not to take up any legislation that would further harm individuals struggling with an opioid use disorder. The repeal of the Affordable Care Act could strip health care coverage from 2.8 million Americans suffering from a substance use disorder. The House legislation up for vote this week, “The American Health Care Act”, would upend coverage for the 1.3 million Americans who access behavioral health care services as a result of Medicaid expansion through the health care law. In the letter, the senators point to the fact that 12 percent of adult Medicaid beneficiaries live with some form of a substance abuse disorder, and Medicaid finances one-third of the medication-assisted treatment administered for opioid and other substance use disorders in the country.

“The bill removes the requirement that insurers provide minimum levels of coverage for the cost of covered services, which will mean that consumers will have to pay more out-of-pocket for their health care needs. This, coupled with insufficient premium tax credits, the repeal of the cost-sharing subsidies, and high-risk pools, will substantially hinder access to care for those with mental health and substance

use disorders,” **write the senators in their letter to Leader McConnell.** “Given that lack of insurance coverage and an inability to afford care often result in individuals forgoing substance use disorder treatment, this proposal could very literally translate into a death spiral for those with opioid use disorders.”

Other senators signing the letter include Senators Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Joe Manchin III (D-WV), Jack Reed (D-RI), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Al Franken (D-MN), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Patty Murray (D-WA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Mark Warner (D-VA), and Bill Nelson (D-FL).

A copy of the letter can be found [here](#).