

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Joins Bipartisan Group of Senators Urging Congressional Leadership to Commit Resources to Opioid Epidemic

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – As the Nation’s opioid epidemic continues to ravage communities across the country, U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin joined a bipartisan coalition in calling on Senate leadership to provide states with the resources they need to tackle this ongoing public health emergency.

In their letter, the bipartisan group urge Leaders Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and Chuck Schumer (D-NY) to include additional funding dedicated to addressing the crisis in the upcoming supplemental and omnibus appropriations legislation.

“Opioid misuse is not a partisan issue. It is ravaging communities in every state and preys upon individuals and families regardless of party affiliation,” **wrote the Senators.** “We have worked together on this issue in the past, and with the clear statement from Acting Secretary Hargan that the administration is looking for Congress to lead the way, it is time for us to work together again. As the Senate considers pending supplemental and omnibus appropriation legislation, please make every effort to ensure that new, substantial and sustained funding for the opioid epidemic is included in any legislative package.”

In addition to Senator Baldwin, Senators Bob Casey (D-PA), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Joe Manchin (D-WV), Susan Collins (R-ME) and Angus King (I-ME) also signed the letter.

The full text of the letter is available [here](#) and can be seen below:

December 15, 2017

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Democratic Leader Schumer:

We write today to discuss our Nation's opioid misuse epidemic and the urgent need for Congress to provide our states with the resources they need to deal with this public health emergency. In light of recent statements from the administration asking Congress to act on this issue, we believe the upcoming supplemental and omnibus appropriations legislation present significant opportunities for additional funding.

As you are aware, the opioid misuse epidemic is taking a toll on individuals, families and communities across the Nation. It is tearing apart families and straining the resources of local governments, law enforcement and public health agencies. Although we are pleased by the recent declaration of the epidemic as a public health emergency, that action needs to be coupled with adequate, sustained resources.

On December 4, Acting HHS Secretary Eric Hargan stated that the administration is "looking forward to hearing from Congress about how they intend to address this." That means it is up to us to act. We urge you to advance a spending package that will provide substantial new resources for our families and our communities who have waited too long for help. Although the measures in the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA), the 21st Century Cures legislation and the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017 were important first steps, we must now build upon those efforts to ensure that states have adequate resources for first responders, enforcement, prevention efforts and treatment and recovery services. We must also provide more resources for research into addiction and pain, to gain a better understanding of the disease and develop innovative new treatments for substance misuse.

Opioid misuse is not a partisan issue. It is ravaging communities in every state and preys upon individuals and families regardless of party affiliation. We have worked together on this issue in the past, and with the clear statement from Acting Secretary Hargan that the administration is looking for Congress to lead the way, it is time for us to work together again. As the Senate considers pending supplemental and omnibus appropriation legislation, please make every effort to

ensure that new, substantial and sustained funding for the opioid epidemic is included in any legislative package.

Thank you and we look forward to working with you to ensure that our communities receive the resources they need to effectively address this national crisis.

Sincerely,

An online version of this release is available [here](#).