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Baldwin in victory speech knocks outside spending against her

Posted on Wednesday, Nov 7, 2018

U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin credited her supporters for giving her a path to victory over Republican challenger Leah Vukmir, despite the third-party spending leveled against the Madison Dem.

Baldwin, calling out the outside group spending in the race in her speech at Madison's Monona Terrace, added that she "had something that they (the outside groups) didn't have: you."

Baldwin was welcomed onto the stage for her victory speech by a crowd full of cheering supporters and Pat Benatar's "Hit Me With Your Best Shot," a song that serves as testament to what she describes as a "hard fought race."

She also outlined several goals for her second term, including doing "right by Wisconsin" by fighting to maintain coverage for pre-existing conditions and "giving workers a stronger voice." Baldwin referenced the U.S. economy at large, stating the need for "better trade deals, not trade wars."

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And Baldwin made a point of addressing the country's political climate, saying that U.S. democracy "demands more than to simply beat the other side."

The victorious senator also congratulated Vukmir and thanked her for her service in the state Senate.

Meanwhile, Vukmir in her concession speech in Pewaukee thanked God, her family, her supporters and her campaign team. She said she ran as an underdog and ran "as hard a race as you can run in Wisconsin."

Despite their differences, she said she enjoyed debating Baldwin.

“Even though we don’t see eye-to eye on the issues — to say the least — she ran a hard-fought race,” the Brookfield Republican said. “I certainly enjoyed debating her the past few months.”

She said that while it’s a difficult night, she “wouldn’t change anything” about how she ran her campaign.

“While we may have been outspent, we were never outworked,” Vukmir said.

— By Brighid Hartnett and David Wise