

# **U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Ahead of open enrollment, U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin presses HHS on navigator funding**

Posted on Monday, Jun 25, 2018

**>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Contact: [press@baldwin.senate.gov](mailto:press@baldwin.senate.gov)  
202-224-6225

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin sent a letter to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Alex Azar and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Administrator Seema Verma calling for transparency and expediency regarding Navigator program funding. The Navigator program funds nonprofit entities and health care organizations to assist consumers in navigating, shopping and enrolling in health insurance coverage.

In past years, the federal grant process for Navigators was underway by April, but as of today, CMS has yet to put out a formal call for grant applications. The Administration has also failed to provide details on how much money will be available to groups, adding to the uncertainty for Navigators only a year after many had their funding significantly reduced. It is clear that the Administration's attempts to sabotage the health care system continue.

“We are writing to request that you immediately release funding details for the Navigators program for the upcoming Open Enrollment period for 2019,” wrote the Senators. “Any further delay would be just another example of the Trump Administration's continued attempts to undermine the health care system, which serves only to hurt Americans who are seeking quality and affordable health insurance to protect themselves and their families.”

The Navigator program, required by federal law, plays a vital role in helping consumers prepare electronic and paper applications to establish eligibility and enroll in coverage through the Marketplaces and potentially qualify for insurance affordability programs. They also provide outreach, education and assistance to underserved populations, including individuals with limited English proficiency, complex financial circumstances and those eligible for Medicaid.

Senator Baldwin has worked on bipartisan solutions to strengthen and stabilize the health insurance market and improve access to health care. Senator Baldwin is a [cosponsor of the bipartisan Murray-Alexander health care stabilization legislation](#), and led the effort in the Senate to restore investments in enrollment outreach and in-person assistance, which the Trump Administration gutted last year.

In addition to Senator Baldwin, U.S. Senator Bob Casey (D-PA) led the letter which was signed by Senators Patty Murray (D-WA), Richard Durbin (D-IL), Bill Nelson (D-FL), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Mark Warner (D-VA), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Brian Schatz (D-HI), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Maggie Hassan (D-NH).

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