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U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Calls for immediate action to combat climate change

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Baldwin joins 24 Senate colleagues in backing the recent report and National Climate Assessment on the consequences of climate change

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Following the release of a scientific report outlining severe projected impacts from climate change, U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin and 24 of her Senate colleagues are speaking out and calling for action. Senator Baldwin cosponsored a resolution, led by Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR), supporting the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report and last week's National Climate Assessment to affirm the acceptance of these findings and call for bold action to combat climate change.

"Global climate change is real and we must act now to confront this fact because public health and our economy is threatened," **said Senator Baldwin.** "The impact of climate change can be seen on agriculture, biodiversity, extreme weather and our Great Lakes. We have a moral obligation to act on climate change so we can keep our promise to future generations to confront today's challenges and pass on a world better than we found it. "

On October 8, the IPCC released a report outlining the consequences of rising global temperatures and the ways in which climate chaos will become substantially worse as the planet continues to experience pre-industrial levels of warming. The report

showed that the difference between warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius and 2 degrees Celsius is substantial, and limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius is affordable, feasible and necessary to protect people from the worst impacts of climate change. The report concludes that unless the current path of climate change is slowed, massive impacts—such as limited water supply availability, sea-ice free Arctic summers, mass die-offs of coral reefs, and intense and unprecedented heat waves—will become reality as soon as 2040.

Last Friday, the Trump Administration released the National Climate Assessment, a Congressionally mandated report from American climate experts throughout the federal government. Despite the Trump Administration's attempts to bury the report on Black Friday, the report has gained widespread attention for its alarming findings—which include evidence that the U.S. is already feeling the effects of climate change, and conclusions that our nation will suffer thousands of deaths and over $500 billion per year in crop damage, lost labor, and extreme weather damages by 2100.

Specifically, the IPCC report found that:

· The last 50-year period in the Northern Hemisphere has the warmest average temperature of any 50-year period in 500 years.

· At current rates of greenhouse gas emissions, by 2040, Earth will warm by 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels.

· At a 1.5-degree Celsius temperature rise, the global population exposed to water stress could be 50 percent lower than if the global temperature rises 2 degrees Celsius.

· At warming at or above 2 degrees Celsius, the world could experience loss of greater than 99 percent of all coral reefs on Earth and mass migration from regions most affected by atmospheric changes.

For U.S.-specific impacts, the National Climate Assessment found that:

· The U.S. is already experiencing impacts from the changing climate, including threats from rising seas and increased flooding.

· 2 degrees Celsius or higher warming would cost the U.S. a 15% drop in corn and soybean yields.

· The U.S. economy will lose over $500 billion annually from lost labor, crop failure, and damages related to extreme weather if we continue on our current course.

· By 2100, climate change could cost the U.S. up to a tenth of GDP, more than double the losses of the Great Recession.

The Senate resolution was also cosponsored by Senators Edward J. Markey (D-MA), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Tom Udall (D-NM), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Patty Murray (D-WA), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Tina Smith (D-MN), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Brian Schatz (D-HI), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Dick Durbin (D-IL), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Jack Reed (D-RI), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Kamala Harris (D-CA), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Maggie Hassan (D-NH) and Michael Bennet (D-CO).

The full resolution is available here.

An online version of this release is available here.