

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Hosts roundtable with Green Bay officials on fighting the opioid epidemic

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GREEN BAY, WI – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin today hosted a roundtable with Green Bay first responders, health and human services officials and community leaders to get an update on Brown County’s efforts to address drug abuse in the community and ensure that Green Bay officials have the tools they need to combat the opioid epidemic and save lives.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Baldwin helped secure a \$3 billion increase in federal funding to fight the opioid epidemic in the bipartisan spending legislation that was recently signed by President Trump. Senator Baldwin has also introduced legislation to expand and extend the State Targeted Opioid Response Grant program and do more to address growing methamphetamine abuse in our state.

“In Wisconsin, the people working in our communities to combat this crisis need investments for local prevention, treatment and recovery efforts. Local law enforcement, health providers and the families who face this epidemic every day need action, support and resources. That is why I worked across party lines to increase the federal investment to help fight the opioid epidemic in Wisconsin,” said Senator Baldwin. “My work is not done taking on this public health crisis and I will continue working to expand and extend funding for the opioid epidemic and help tackle growing methamphetamine abuse in our state.”

Senator Baldwin spoke with Brown County Executive Troy Streckenbach; Barbara Jordan, Director of Brown County Substance Abuse Services; Tyler Luedke, AODA Case Manager and Prevention Specialist; Mark Vandenhoogen, Director of Brown County Treatment Court; Dr. Michelle Langenfeld, Superintendent of Green Bay Area Public Schools; Dustin Ridings, Captain of the Emergency Services Division at Green Bay Metro Fire Department; and Jesse Heffernan of Recovery Services about how the opioid epidemic and other illicit drugs like methamphetamine have impacted the community.

As a member of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Senator Baldwin has been pushing for expanded resources to help states and tribal communities better fight the increasing opioid and illicit drug abuse epidemic that continues to surge across the state.

Senator Baldwin has been working to provide states with better flexibility to use more of this funding to fight the growing problem of meth abuse in Wisconsin. According to the Brown County Drug Task Force, the task force seized more than three times the amount of meth in 2017 as the year before. From 2011 to 2015, meth use also increased by 300 percent statewide.

The government funding agreement included key provisions led by Senator Baldwin, including an additional \$1 billion investment for the State Targeted Opioid Response (STR) Grant at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for Fiscal Year 2018. It also has more resources for tribal communities and for states that have been especially hard hit by the epidemic with high opioid mortality rates.

Senator Baldwin was also able to secure a significant increase in opioid treatment and prevention funding to support service members at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The bipartisan omnibus spending bill signed by the President includes more than \$55 million to continue VA's implementation of Senator Baldwin's Jason Simcakoski Memorial and Promise Act, which was signed into law in 2016. This new funding will help support the opioid safety initiatives and reforms outlined in "Jason's Law."

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