

# U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Calls for HELP Committee hearing on health outbreak connected to vaping

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin, a member of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP), is calling for a hearing on the outbreak of severe lung disease connected to vaping.

In a letter to Senate HELP Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-WA), Senator Baldwin emphasizes the increasing number of cases of this mystery illness that have been identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and stresses the Committee's responsibility to investigate the outbreak, provide resources to local officials and work to prevent future cases.

Senator Baldwin writes, "As of September 19, CDC had confirmed seven deaths, and more than 500 cases in 38 states and one territory, yet questions remain regarding the specific cause of the outbreak. I find it deeply troubling that more than 15 percent of these cases were in children under 18 years old, especially as the most recent numbers from the National Tobacco Youth Survey indicates that 27.5 percent of teenagers had vaped in the past 30 days.

She continues, "Wisconsin has been on the frontlines of this outbreak. Physicians at the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin were the first to publicly identify this mystery illness, and officials at the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) were the first in the nation to issue a warning to the public. I am incredibly proud of the work authorities in my home state have done to promote a coordinated response to this outbreak. I believe that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions can learn important information by hearing directly from state and local health entities

working on the ground.

Baldwin concludes, “The Committee has a responsibility to gain a better understanding of how to support officials on the ground, learn about the specific causes of the outbreak, determine how we can combat future outbreaks, and prevent children from using these products.”

The full letter is available [here](#).

Earlier this month, Senator Baldwin urged the CDC to activate its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to address the outbreak of severe lung disease connected to vaping. Following this request, the CDC activated its EOC that allows the agency to provide increased operational support for the response to meet the outbreak’s evolving challenges.