

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Helps introduce bipartisan reform to examine scope of insulin affordability crisis, bring relief to americans struggling to afford medication

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – In association with World Diabetes Day, U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin, a member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today helped introduce bipartisan legislation to create a national study to more fully understand the scope of the insulin affordability crisis in America.

The bipartisan *Insulin Affordability Data Collection Act*, led by Senators Tina Smith (D-MN) and Kevin Cramer (R-ND), would direct the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to study rates of diabetic ketoacidosis. It would also direct HHS investigators to look into how high insulin prices make it more difficult for people with diabetes to adhere to their insulin prescriptions, and to calculate the amount of money Federal health programs could save if they didn't have to treat Americans who need additional care because they are unable to afford their proper doses.

“I’ve heard from countless Wisconsinites who are struggling to afford the prescriptions they need—including insulin,” **said Senator Baldwin**. “In recent years, the price of insulin has skyrocketed and it’s clear these steep price increases are resulting in patients lacking access to this life-saving medication. Our bipartisan reform is a first step towards understanding this serious issue and delivering solutions that will bring down the price of insulin, which patients and families need.”

“We know that thousands of people are rationing their insulin and that some are paying with their lives like Alec Smith because we’re hearing tragic stories firsthand, and seeing Facebook groups pop up dedicated to helping Americans access insulin. We need to do more than just gathering piecemeal information and have the federal government fully behind addressing this crisis,” **said Senator Smith**. “Our bipartisan bill is about continuing to elevate this issue, fully understanding the scope of what we’re dealing with, and then developing solutions to help the Americans struggling to afford their life-saving insulin.”

“50,000 North Dakotans need insulin to live, yet we struggle to understand why it is becoming so expensive and what we can do to change that. We need answers,” **said Senator Cramer**. “This legislation is an investment in fixing the insulin affordability crisis.”

The *Insulin Affordability Data Collection Act* would require the HHS Secretary through the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) to conduct a study that examines the impact of the affordability of insulin on individuals who are insulin-dependent. Specifically, this study will investigate the impact of the affordability of insulin products on:

- Adherence to insulin prescriptions;
- Rates of diabetic ketoacidosis;
- Downstream impacts of insulin adherence (e.g. rates of dialysis treatment and end-stage renal disease);
- Spending by Medicare, Medicaid, and other Federal health programs on acute care episodes that could be averted by adhering to an insulin prescription; and
- Other factors, as appropriate.

This bill would further separate instances of insulin affordability by an individual’s insurance status. Under this legislation, ASPE would be required to submit this report to Congress within two years of enactment. The bill is supported by the American Diabetes Association (ADA), the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF), and T1International.

The bill is also cosponsored by Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL), Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-

MS) and Roger Wicker (R-MS).

Senator Baldwin has been continuing her fight to bring down the rising costs of the medicine people depend on. Baldwin's bipartisan *FAIR Drug Pricing Act* [passed the Senate HELP Committee](#) in June and it would address skyrocketing prescription drug prices by requiring transparency for pharmaceutical corporations that plan to increase drug prices. She also introduced the *Affordable Medications Act* with Senator Smith to hold big pharmaceutical corporations accountable for high prescription drug prices and help bring down health care costs for Americans.

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