

# U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Introduces legislation to allow Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices and lower costs for seniors

Posted on Wednesday, Jan 9, 2019

>> **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 today joined Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) in reintroducing legislation to unleash the bargaining power of seniors for a better deal on prescription drug costs. The *Empowering Medicare Seniors to Negotiate Drug Prices Act* would allow for Medicare to negotiate the best possible price of prescription drugs to cut costs for nearly 43 million seniors enrolled in Medicare Part D. Current law only allows for bargaining by pharmaceutical companies and prohibits Medicare from doing so.

“We have a broken system in Washington that prohibits the federal government from negotiating lower prescription drug prices for older Wisconsinites,” said Senator Baldwin. “I have long championed efforts to allow the government to negotiate directly with pharmaceutical corporations to get better prices on lifesaving medicines instead of increasing drug company profits. President Trump campaigned in 2016 on lowering the cost of prescription drugs, including by allowing Medicare to negotiate drug prices. It’s time for the President to work with Congress to pass this commonsense reform that will help lower out-of-pocket costs for seniors. This legislation is a critical reform that would help safeguard the Medicare program and keep our promises to seniors and taxpayers.”

The *Empowering Medicare Seniors to Negotiate Drug Prices Act* would allow the Secretary of Health and Human Services to directly negotiate with drug companies

for price discounts for the Medicare Prescription Drug Program, eliminating the “non-interference” clause that expressly bans Medicare from negotiating for better prices. By harnessing the bargaining power of nearly 43 million seniors, Medicare could negotiate bigger discounts than pharmaceutical companies.

In addition to Baldwin, Senators Chuck Schumer (D-NY), Patty Murray (D-WA), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Kamala Harris (D-CA), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Angus King (I-ME), Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Chris Murphy (D-CT), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Tom Udall (D-NM), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Joe Manchin (D-WV), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Mark Warner (D-VA), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), Jack Reed (D-RI), Tina Smith (D-MN) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) are also cosponsors of the legislation.

In the House of Representatives, the bipartisan companion bill is led by Representatives Peter Welch (D-VT) and Francis Rooney (R-FL).

Full text of the legislation is available [here](#).

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