

U.S. Senator Baldwin: Helps Introduce comprehensive reform to address skyrocketing prescription drug prices

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The Affordable Medications Act Would Hold Drug Companies Accountable For High Prices, Bring Down Costs for Seniors, Families and Taxpayers

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin today joined Senator Tina Smith (D-MN) to introduce comprehensive legislation to hold big pharmaceutical corporations accountable for high prescription drug prices and help bring down health care costs for Americans.

The measure would promote transparency by requiring pharmaceutical companies to disclose just how much money is going toward research and development, as well as marketing and pay for executives. It would also end the restriction that prevents the federal Medicare program from using its buying power to negotiate lower drug prices for its beneficiaries, and curb drug company monopoly practices that keep prices high and prevent less expensive generics from coming to the market.

“Wisconsinites are struggling to afford the lifesaving medications they need because drug companies are raising the costs of prescription drugs,” said Senator Baldwin. “I’m working with Senator Smith to make health care more affordable by

holding Big Pharma accountable and lowering the costs of prescription drugs for patients and taxpayers. The Affordable Medications Act would allow Medicare to use its buying power to negotiate lower prices and create more competition in the market to bring down prescription drug prices. Lowering health care costs is a top priority for families and our reforms offer solutions.”

“My bill is a comprehensive effort to bring prescription drug prices down—which is the number one thing Minnesotans talk to me about,” said Senator Smith. “We need to improve competition, make the big drug companies tell us exactly how they’re spending all the money that they’re making and allow Medicare to negotiate lower prices with these drug companies. Right now, these companies are just naming their price and Americans have to pay it. When you hear about people rationing their life-saving medication because they can’t afford the dosage recommended by their physicians, you know we have a real problem, and I want to fix it.”

Spending on retail prescription drugs is expected to reach \$360.3 billion this year. This spending drives up the overall cost of health care, making insurance premiums increasingly unaffordable and placing an unnecessary burden on taxpayers.

The Affordable Medications Act is a comprehensive set of reforms that will help lower prescription drug prices by:

- Requiring pharmaceutical companies to report how much they spend on research and development, advertising, marketing, and CEO pay;
- Making drugs more affordable by allowing Medicare to use its buying power to negotiate lower prices; penalizing drug companies that spike drug prices; and allowing for the safe importation of cheaper drugs from other countries, like Canada;
- Creating an innovation fund for new antibiotics and publicly funding clinical trials for new drugs to spur innovation; and
- Blocking unfair and anticompetitive drug monopoly practices and helping more low-cost generic competitors come to market.

In addition to Senators Baldwin and Smith, current Senate cosponsors of the Affordable Medications Act include Senators Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Richard Durbin (D-IL), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-

NY), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Jack Reed (D-R.I.), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Tom Udall (D-NM), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI).

You can read a summary of the bill [here](#) and a section-by-section of the legislation [here](#).

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