

U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin: Urges CDC to address outbreak of severe lung disease connected to vaping

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin is raising concerns to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) about the outbreak of severe lung disease connected to vaping in Wisconsin and throughout the nation.

In her letter to CDC Director Dr. Robert R. Redfield, Senator Baldwin asks how the agency is supporting states in their response to this outbreak and urges the CDC to provide additional support, including activating an Emergency Operations Center (EOC), to address this public health threat.

Senator Baldwin wrote, *“I write to express serious concerns about the multistate outbreak of severe lung disease associated with e-cigarette use. This mystery illness, first publicly identified at the Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin, has sickened hundreds of Americans, including over 30 individuals in my home state of Wisconsin. In addition, six deaths have already been reported in conjunction with this illness. As cases continue to be identified and the prevalence of e-cigarette use among children and teenagers rises, I ask that you provide more information about how your agency is supporting states in their response to this outbreak and urge you to provide additional support to address this public health threat, including by activating an Emergency Operations Center.*

She continued, *“My home state has been on the frontlines of this outbreak, from identifying the first cases to working with CDC to develop a specific case definition but we need additional help from the CDC.*

Baldwin concluded, *“We are in the midst of a serious nationwide outbreak first*

identified in teenagers. I urge CDC to take action to support states in their response to this crisis, including by activating an EOC that can provide the resources necessary for understanding the cause of this illness and preventing future cases.”

Specifically, Senator Baldwin asks the CDC to:

1. Provide more information on the metrics used to determine if an EOC should be activated and additional details on how an EOC could further support states in their response;
2. Work with states to ensure that experts from across offices and centers are deployed appropriately to identify the cause of this outbreak;
3. Describe how the CDC is working with FDA and state health departments to analyze samples coming from patients across the country, as well as provide more information on the progress that has been made in testing the range of chemicals commonly used in these products; and
4. State how the CDC is working to ensure that information about this serious outbreak is being distributed to young people.