

Citizen Action, U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Call for bold COVID-19 economic relief

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Statewide: In a virtual town hall meeting this morning over 160 Citizen Action leaders and members heard a full report from U.S. Senator Baldwin on the need to maintain and further extend economic relief during the COVID-19 pandemic. [Watch Tammy Baldwin's entire 30 minute presentation and Q&A session here.](#) Milwaukee small business owner Ryan Clancy also joined the call to discuss the urgent need for further economic relief.



The COVID-19 induced economic crisis requires an urgent and large scale federal response. The duration of the pandemic, which is growing in Wisconsin and most of the country, and the persistent depression-like economic repercussions it is

producing, could not have been fully anticipated in March when the last large scale relief passage was enacted. In addition, most of the minimal relief targeted to middle class and working people is set to expire July 25, including the enhanced unemployment benefits keeping tens of millions of working families afloat.

Tammy Baldwin's Jobs for Economic Recovery Act would create a national subsidized jobs program to create hundreds of thousands of frontline jobs reminiscent of the Community Conservation Corps from the New Deal. The Rebuilding Main Street Act extends the \$600/week unemployment stimulus payments to those out of work and applies the increased benefit to work-share programs, which subsidize workers for wages lost as a result of a company-wide reduction in hours. These two bills would prevent layoffs and put jobseekers back to work. Senator Baldwin is working with a coalition of Senators pushing for the inclusion of these provisions in the next COVID-19 relief package, expected to be considered this month.

In Citizen Action's view, a large scale publicly-subsidized jobs program would also be an opportunity to initiative the green transition we need to prevent a climate genocide, and to employ people in the most depressed areas and constituencies, including people of color and folks who live in depressed rural regions.

"The ongoing public health and economic crisis in America demands solutions from Washington and Congressional action," said Senator Baldwin. "The Work share programs like the updated one we have in Wisconsin need to be supported so employers can avoid worker layoffs." Baldwin concluded: "Millions of Americans are unemployed and struggling to make ends meet, so we need a bold, federal investment in state and local transitional jobs programs to create job opportunities and put people back to work. As we support workers and businesses in our recovery from this economic crisis, this legislation is a stronger way forward and we should seize it."

"In this great national emergency, the American people deserve and expect bold leadership up to the scale of the crisis," said Robert Kraig, Executive Director of Citizen Action of Wisconsin. "As working and middle class families confront employment conditions not seen in this country since the 1930s, they need both the continuation of the temporary economic relief enacted in March, and bold new investments in job creation that can only come from the federal government. We commend Senator Tammy Baldwin for stepping up with powerful policy proposals on the scale of the original New Deal. Her proposals, for which she is building

support with a diverse coalition of Senators, are of the magnitude needed to address the current economic crisis, and lay the groundwork for a new economy needed to prevent a climate cataclysm, and extend opportunity to all those who have been shut out, especially people of color and the residents of depressed rural areas.”

Link to news release <https://www.citizenactionwi.org/news/press-release/-senator-baldwin-citizen-action-call-for-bold-covid-19-economic-relief/>

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