

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Democratic leadership request Pence abandon reckless plan to preside over Senate after multiple COVID-19 exposures

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin, the Senate Democratic Conference Secretary, joined her fellow members of Senate Democratic Leadership to call on Vice President Mike Pence, following his recent exposure to COVID-19, to abandon plans to preside over Judge Amy Coney Barrett's confirmation vote to the Supreme Court. Five of the Vice President's closest aides have tested positive for COVID-19 in recent days, and it would be a clear violation of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for him to appear in the Senate Chamber. Despite the close contact, the Vice President has said he plans on continuing with his schedule, deeming his work "essential."

In addition to Baldwin, the letter was signed by Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY), Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Assistant Democratic Leader Patty Murray, (D-WA), Senate Democratic Policy and Communications Committee Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Vice Chair of the Conference Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Vice Chair of the Conference Senator Mark Warner (D-VA), Chair of Steering Committee Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Chair of Outreach Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Vice Chair of the Democratic Policy and Communications Committee Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV).

In the letter, the Senators wrote that the Vice President should not put Senators, staff and Capitol personnel at risk of contracting the disease. See the full text of the

letter below. A PDF of the letter is available [HERE](#).

October 25, 2020

The Honorable Michael R. Pence
Vice President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Vice President Pence,

We are writing today about your reported intention to attend the final Senate vote on the nomination of Judge Amy Coney Barrett to be an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. With five of your closest aides recently testing positive for COVID-19, it is not a risk worth taking. We ask you to reconsider.

Not only would your presence in the Senate Chamber tomorrow be a clear violation of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines, it would also be a violation of common decency and courtesy. Your presence alone could be very dangerous to many people - not just Senators, but to all the truly essential staff - both Democratic and Republican - who must be physically present inside the U.S. Capitol for it to function. These men and women are the Capitol Police officers, the custodians, the food service workers, the floor staff, and everyone else that makes the Capitol complex work. On their behalf, please reconsider your decision to attend tomorrow's vote.

Nothing about your presence in the Senate tomorrow can be considered essential. You will not need to cast the deciding vote to break a tie. Your presence tomorrow would be purely ceremonial.

We believe that if you and President Trump finally began to take this crisis seriously, instead of taking actions that could further increase the spread, we would all be safer and better off. We appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

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